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RECOLLECTIONS

OF

DR. MILLINGEN.

REPUBLICAN FRANCE.

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Day & Son Lith.rs to the Queen

Dr Millingen

London, Henry Colburn, 1848

RECOLLECTIONS

OF

REPUBLICAN FRANCE,

FROM 1790 TO 1801.

BY

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PREFACE.

HAVING had frequent occasions of relating to the circle of my acquaintance, many of the eventful scenes of my chequered career, I have often been urged to submit an account of them to the public. I am well aware, that the incidents in the life of a humble member of society, are of little importance to the community at large; yet, when that individual has witnessed the most momentous occurrences of his times, his recollections may not only be interesting, but useful.

It has been said that, "no man appears great in the eyes of his valet," and this truth is rendered more striking, when the conduct (often

unaccountable) of public characters becomes the subject, either of contemporary writings, or of future historians' labours. Puzzled, indeed, must be those historians, when, in another age, they will have to record the events of the French Revolution, and to collect the scattered materials that their work will require!

Many histories of those fearful times have been laid before the world. De Staël, Thiers, Mignet, Michelet, Lamartine, and many other able writers have described those convulsions, which have shaken the universe to its very foundation, and appear, even now, to throw open the sluice-gates that have hitherto restrained an overwhelming inundation. Yet, when reading the accounts given by these writers, both of events, and of the principal actors in the terrific drama, they vary so essentially, both in general conclusions and individual details, that one could scarcely believe that they are relating the same transactions. The reason of these apparent discrepancies of opinion is obvious;—all these writers, or rather biographers, were influenced not only by personal motives

and their particular political doctrines, but by a desire, either to extenuate crime, on the plea of expediency, or to depreciate virtuous actions, on the score of timidity, or self-interest.

When we register the actions of public men in the annals of the world, we must not take a partial view of their deeds, in their public stations—in the field of battle, or in the legislative rostrum—in numerous assemblies, and in critical positions;—we must follow them in the privacy of their retirement—in their domestic circle: we must, I might say, become eaves-droppers, and overhear the soliloquies of their ambition, their disappointments, and their revengeful projects. Man, like unorganized bodies, must be tested by analysis and synthesis;—he must pass through the crucible of prosperity and adversity. It is only *then*, that we can venture to appreciate his actions, or his motives—it is only *then*, that we can form an estimate of his true character, and often discover, that acts, which appear to display resplendent abilities and lofty genius, are but the results of accidental occurrences and of fortuitous contingencies, and that energetic

resolves, which are attributed to deep and comprehensive forethought, are but the offspring of that quick apprehension and prompt determination which have enabled great men to avail themselves of a fortunate opportunity, and prove that—

> "There is a tide in the affairs of man,
> "Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune."

It has been my lot (from circumstances with which my readers will become acquainted) to have been, I may say, behind the scenes during the fatal events that I have recorded. I have known some of the actors—have seen them disrobed of their dramatic trappings, and in the trivial scenes of ordinary life, have beheld them unmasked. It is chiefly these trifling circumstances that I have endeavoured to relate. Historians are more indebted to the private memoirs and to the diaries of their *dramatis personæ*, than to the contemporary accounts of their ostensible characters. In these cases, the most humble observer may contribute more essentially to the history of the epoch than a Tacitus. What would we not give for a diary kept by a

prompter, or even a scene-shifter, of Shakspeare's time, who had noted down all the little incidents of green-room, and rehearsal, and performance—the gossip, the chit-chat, behind and before the curtain, and followed the immortal philosopher in all his haunts and wanderings! We can place reliance on such recollections: whereas professors of histriology, for the purpose of serving the views of party or of patronage, will stretch the unfortunate Clio on a Procrustean couch; and, according to circumstances, torture her fettered limbs into a gigantic stature, or a dwarfish degeneracy.

In the following pages, I have not been influenced by any interested or biassed motives. I have given an unvarnished statement of facts, as far as my memory served me. It may be urged that, at so early a period of life, I was unable to form any opinion concerning passing events. This, to a certain degree, is true; but it must be borne in mind, that I was surrounded by persons of sound judgment and shrewd observation, whose conversation I daily, nay, hourly, listened to. Moreover, catastrophes,

such as those that I then witnessed, are of such an astounding nature as to impress on the mind even of a child, indelible reminiscences. Mixing with the people, I have described them, and their habits, their pursuits, their absurd convictions, and their wild excesses. I have shown what the French *were*—what, in my humble opinion, they still *are*, and what most likely they *will be*, until time, and dearly-bought experience may effect a total change in their national character, and qualify them to be ruled by gentle means,—fitting them to appreciate the blessings of free institutions, and to comprehend what is meant by the word Liberty, of which they have no more notion than of the quadrature of the circle; for, as to *perpetual motion*, that has hitherto been considered an impossibility, I must do them the justice to say, they may fairly claim its discovery.

J. G. M.

London:
4th May, 1848.

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PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS.

CHAPTER I.

Birth and parentage—Millingen famous for its bricks—Effects of a scull—Chinese sympathetic balls—Cracherode—Numismatics—Townley—Taste for prints and shells—A terrible fire—An Anabaptist preacher—Long grace, and its dire results—A short-hand writer—Matthews, the clerical bookseller—Early taste for the drama—Count d'Estaing—Dishonesty of the French Government—The Revolution—Departure for Paris.

THE night of the 8th of September, 1782, ushered me into the world. My father then resided at No. 9, Queen Square, Westminster, at that period a fashionable locality. I was christened at St. Margaret's, and received the name of John Gideon, from my godfather, Sir John Gideon Loten, a Governor of Ceylon;

and I possess one of the early engravings of Bartolozzi, in the year 1755, representing a Madonna and child, dedicated to him.

This said father of mine, was Michael Van Millingen, a native of Rotterdam. He had left his family at an early period of life, and went out to Batavia as a writer. From whence we derived the name of Millingen (a small town in Holland), I know not; but I have heard that our armorials are over the town-hall, and the Duke Bernard of Saxe Weimar told me that it was a place celebrated for its bricks.

Of my father's career in India, I know but little: he became a partner in the commercial house in which he was employed—was an officer in the militia—distinguished himself in some revolt of the Chinese population, and, when encamped in a morass, caught a sciatica, which ever after annoyed him occasionally. Moreover, he had realized a tolerable independence, and married a wealthy orphan, my beloved mother, Elizabeth Westplaten Cole, whose uncle was an Admiral in the Dutch service.

Soon after this marriage he repaired to Eng-

land, the land of his predilection; for, although a Dutchman, he disliked his countrymen, and abhorred their tyrannical and arbitrary sway in their East India possessions, which he had visited, as well as such parts of China as were open to their trade. I recollect his relating to me an occurrence that took place at Canton. The custom-house officers examined his packages, and, amongst other articles, was a trunk belonging to a surgeon, containing books, and a scull. The moment the Chinamen beheld it, they all jumped overboard into their praam, without any further search. My father was in possession of many Chinese and Japanese curiosities, rich specimens of lacker, arms, and some of those mysterious sympathetic metallic balls, described by several travellers (Thunberg among others), and which were in great demand amongst the Chinese ladies—whose morality, no doubt, has been improved, since I never hear those strange articles mentioned now-a-days.

Unfortunately for his family, my worthy father was prone to follow two fearful pursuits—*speculation* and *travel*. He could never allow

either his purse or his person a moment's rest, or stagnation. *Keep moving* should have been his motto, instead of the one we bear—*a Lege et Rege*—a constitutional monarchic device, the origin of which I never was able to trace, although I have been told that we descended from a King of Poland, I think yclept *Schalderaval*, but at what time he reigned, I leave to the inquisitive to inquire. Our crest, a *lion passant*, was alleged as a confirmation of something like an aristocratic origin.

Although of a roving disposition, my father was well read, and cultivated more especially, French literature; Voltaire, Rousseau, D'Alembert, Raynal, were his favourite authors. He was, moreover, very fond of music, played a little on the violin, and was no bad judge in the fine arts. He resided for several years in Italy, and, when at Rome, he became acquainted with the celebrated Ganganelli, who presented a copy of the "Pilgrim's Progress" to my mother, as a fit work for a heretic;—my mother was a rigid Lutheran.

When at Rome, my father indulged in one of

his visionary speculations, and joined a company that had undertaken to turn the course of the Tiber, to seek for the objects of fine art supposed to have been cast into that river by the Northern barbarians. As might have been foreseen, the attempt proved a failure, and the treasure obtained did not defray the expense of a week's labour. A small mutilated *statuette* of the Farnesian Hercules, and one or two broken lamps, were all that fell to my father's share.

On his return to London, my eldest brother died at the age of fourteen, of a putrid sore throat. He was a Westminster boy, and lies buried in the cloisters of the Abbey, with an epitaph on his tomb-stone, indited by Cowper, who was an occasional visitor at our house.

The second son was my brother James, the well-known antiquarian. He was born on the 18th of January, 1774, and was also placed at Westminster School, under Mr. Wingfield, afterwards Dr. Wingfield, who at that period was an usher.

Amongst our neighbours in Queen Square,

was the celebrated Cracherode. This accidental circumstance materially influenced the destinies of my brother. The learned divine was a collector of coins and prints, and young James Millingen experienced great delight in seeing him arranging his medal-cases, and beholding the coinage of ancient times—the effigies of Roman Emperors and Greek Princes —the attributes of extinct Empires and Cities —coins that had probably passed through the hands of the heroes and the sages of whom he daily read. I know not how it is, but the view of a collection of ancient medals produces in my mind more vivid associations of by-gone glories and historic turpitude than the sight of ruined buildings or of busts and statues. I behold, perhaps, the identical pieces that may have jingled in the pockets (I presume the ancients wore pockets) of Alexander and Cæsar, Plato and Aristotle—perhaps one of the very gold pieces that Diogenes may have dropped in the lap of Laïs, or one of the *Denarii* that had bribed Judas Iscariot.

I am not aware that the same notions were

entertained by my brother; but, from that early period of life, he became a Numismatic collector, and an ardent student in archæologic lore, in which he eventually distinguished himself so pre-eminently as to have been called by German biographers the Nestor of Archæology.

Mr. Cracherode had observed this dawn of future learning, and encouraged his juvenile pursuits in every possible manner, by giving him duplicate coins, Pinkerton's and Hunter's Numismatic works, &c.; and all his pocket money was spent in roaming about curiosity-shops and purchasing medals. This vocation, for such it might be called, was also assisted by the antiquarian Townley, who lived near us in Park Place, and his gallery of sculpture was ever open to the young student. Mr. Townley was an enthusiastic collector. A Roman Catholic, he had been sent to France at an early age for education. He afterwards travelled over Greece and Italy, in pursuit of objects of classic veneration; and such was his ardour, that, it is related of him that, on arriving at Syracuse, harassed and exhausted by a long journey, he would

neither take rest nor food until he had visited the Fountain of Arethusa. Although a wealthy man, his mode of living was most quiet and frugal. His statues and busts, he called his dead family, and, in collecting their remains and relieving his tenantry, he expended his whole fortune, and did not even keep a carriage.

I often, although but a child, accompanied my brother; and Mr. Townley gave me the first print I ever possessed, an engraving of his beautiful Discobolus, which now adorns the British Museum. To this circumstance, I attribute my taste for prints, that afforded me much gratification many years after; for, at the age of sixteen, I had already collected upwards of four hundred Callots, De la Bellas, and Leclercs, and had written the life of Callot, with a *Catalogue Raisonné* of his engravings, improved on the *Catalogue de l'Orangère*, a celebrated collector of his *œuvres*. At that period, both my brother and I also collected shells, of which my father was very fond, and, to encourage me in this pursuit, I recollect he gave me the works on conchology of Rumphius and D'Argenville,

and on my birthday, a Hammer Oyster, a thorny woodcock, and a nautilus, with the *Dictionnaire d'Histoire Naturelle of Valmont de Bomare.* Alas! those were happy days!

But to return to my narrative. Our neighbour, Mr. Cracherode, was, I full well recollect, a most extraordinary character. Well do I remember his mild, benevolent countenance, his sleek black suit, and his snow-white wig! He was a perfect woman-hater—retraced his steps when, in coming down stairs, he met one of the house-maids, and walked out of the room when a female entered. Cracherode had also been a Westminster boy. He was a man of the most regular habits, and of a sedentary disposition. He possessed a fine estate in Herefordshire, and had never ventured to go so far as to look at it. He often observed that the extent of his journeys had been to Clapham and Richmond. For forty years of his life, when not prevented by indisposition, he daily went to his bookseller and printseller, Elmsley, and Paine, and every Saturday he repaired to Mudge's, to regulate his watch. He bequeathed

his valuable collection to the British Museum. Fortunately, it was not consumed when his house at the Park side corner of Queen Square took fire. I well recollect being borne on the back of our black footman to see the conflagration, which I looked upon as a bonfire, and, strange to say, through life I have always felt the greatest excitement in hearing of, and have gone great distances to be present at, a fire.

His sister, too, was an oddity, an intimate friend of my mother, who constantly visited her. She possessed a collection of coloured diamonds and of spaniels—I think they were of the Blenheim breed. These pets used to take a morning airing with a footman in the Bird-cage Walk. Although I was ever most partial to dogs, I took a dislike to these creatures when I found that they were fed every day with roast chickens.

It was about this time that our housekeeper, a Mrs. Griffiths, a double-dipped Anabaptist, assured my mother, who spoke much better Malay and Dutch than English, that she was going headlong to destruction—in

short, she persuaded her to become an Anabaptist, and took her to chapel in Grafton Street, where a fashionable preacher, a Mr. Martin, was said to perform miracles. There my mother, dear soul, had got herself dipped on a Christmas eve, and caught a cold that was followed by a glandular swelling of the breast, that the celebrated practitioner Justamond, feared would degenerate into à cancer, and which resisted even my mother's favourite application of blue flannel, nine times dyed, which was supposed to be possessed of some mystic property.

Howbeit, the Rev. Mr. Martin soon became a constant visitor at our house, and very frequently dined with us; being very partial to curry and rice—a standing dish in the family.—On these occasions our holy guest was so prolix in his grace, that the dinner stood a chance of getting cold, and, as my father was of the opinion of Boileau, that

Un dîner réchauffé ne valût jamais rien;

being, moreover, what might be called a free thinker in theological matters, he was in the prac-

tice of *falling to* without further preamble. Not so with my brother and poor me—we were condemned to hear the lengthy *Benedicite* out, and to answer thereunto with a solemn *Amen!*

It so happened that, one unlucky day, Mr. Martin lowered his uplifted eyes upon me, when in the sacrilegious act of making the most hideous faces at him. This sight interrupted his invocations. He thumped the table and swore that unless I was *flayed alive*, the wrath of Heaven would light on the house.

I know not whether his prediction was true—for certainly we have all been unfortunate enough—but this ejaculation excited the wrath of my father, who addressed Mr. Martin with such severity, that he left the house without his dinner,—a circumstance that leads me to conclude, that my father's objurgations must have been somewhat of a galling nature. Warm arguments in Dutch and Malay followed this scene. My brother went to school—I was dispatched to the nursery, where Mrs. Griffiths, my mother's spiritual adviser, would in all likelihood have put Mr. Martin's sentence into

execution, but for my dear little nurse, Maria, who, I well remember, damned the parson as heartily as my father.

Early impressions lay the foundation of many of our future opinions. It is, perhaps, to this circumstance that may be attributed the horror I have ever entertained of priestcraft and cant, of every creed and of all countries. But to return to my story. My brother and I owed Mr. Martin a grudge, and we did not well know how to liquidate our debt, until a favourable opportunity presented itself in a most unexpected manner.

We accompanied my mother to chapel, and one evening, the pew being full, she sent us both up to the gallery, where we took our seats close to the reporter of Mr. Martin's sermons. This worthy scribe had not yet arrived, but his ink-horn was fixed to the front of the gallery, close to a branch candlestick; my brother took out one of the candles, cut off the end of it, and stuck it in the ink-horn. Before the sermon began, the amanuensis made his appearance. I fancy that I behold him—a tall, thin

man, with a bald head, and a long hooked nose on which rode a pair of spectacles. On Mr. Martin's ascending the pulpit, amidst the sighs, and groans, and coughs of the congregation, who were anxious to have their cough out, not to interrupt the homily, our secretary, with eyes fixed on the preacher, was prepared to note down every word that flowed from his evangelic mouth, fancying himself as important a personage as one of the Septuagesimal interpreters. He now dipped his pen in the horn--he began to write—but, oh, horror! he soon perceived he left no traces on his paper. He looked with ghastly vacancy on the nib of his pen—he peered in the ink-stand—but when he found them both full of tallow, he uttered a dismal groan, to which one of Jeremiah's would have been a chuckle, and he staggered out of chapel, no doubt to fetch fresh materials! We could not contain our mirth, and followed him—first going to a neighbouring pastry-cook's shop to eat apple puffs, and then returning to a safe quarter of the chapel.

Suffering from a severe ophthalmia, I was

six years of age before I could read; and the first book placed in my hand was the Bible. Not only was I obliged to read aloud two chapters of the Old and New Testament morning and evening, but additional lectures were inflicted on me as a punishment whenever (and that was daily) I committed any misdemeanour; and, when my eyes became more inflamed, I was accused of rubbing them, to prevent me from perusing the sacred volume, of which, at last, I entertained a perfect dread. My excellent mother, who had once been of a cheerful temper, and, although always of a serious disposition in religious matters, could enjoy public amusements, had now become moody and irritable, and, the misfortunes of her husband in various speculations having materially reduced their circumstances, it was not without much difficulty that she submitted to many privations, which were more severely felt by one accustomed, from her infancy, to all the luxuries of an Eastern life; for, so habituated had she been to Indian customs that, even at this period, she carried a *Betel*-box with her

wherever she went. At this time I recollect she often took me with her to her theological bookseller, Matthews, in the Strand, near Craven Street, the father of our celebrated comedian: little did I think at that time that the son of the clerical Bibliopole would have played in one of my dramatic productions !*

I can date my partiality to theatricals to the earliest period of my life. My brother, notwithstanding his serious studies, was fond of puppet-shows, and constructed a theatre in which he exhibited to his school-fellows some miniature pantomimes. These were to me a source of great amusement: but, my father having taken me to Astley's, where I beheld Harlequin cut into pieces and put together by a magic wand, I verily believe that the motley hero, Columbine, Pantaloon, and the Clown were my day-thoughts and my night-dreams. I shall shortly relate how a pet dog became instrumental in further developing this taste for the drama.

While these trivial scenes were passing in

* The Beehive.

our domestic circle, my father's mind was engrossed by subjects of still more importance in my future destinies. He had lost the greater part of his fortune in various speculations and vexatious law-suits, and he repaired to his native country, with what intention I never could ascertain. He was not long absent. An ardent lover of what is termed liberty, he was delighted with the emancipation of the United States of America, and, a short time after his return to England, the French Revolution burst forth on the dark horizon of despotism like a fiery meteor; and, after the fall of the Bastille, my father started for Paris. His abhorrence of the house of Bourbon was inveterate, and founded both on public and on private grounds: in a public point of view, on the corruption of the Court and all that breathed its pestilential atmosphere; and from private feeling, on the shameful conduct of the French Government towards him.

It appears that a French fleet, disabled in a storm, and under the command of the Comte d'Estaing, was obliged to put into Batavia for

the purpose of refitting. The Admiral was under the necessity of negotiating a loan to enable him to put to sea; and my father took shares, I think, to the amount of £10,000, naturally concluding that the French ministry would ratify the transaction. However, on the return of the fleet to France, when the Dutch merchants applied for payment according to the tenor of the loan, the Government *repudiated* the debt, and it was not until after a long correspondence, and through the influence of the Dutch minister, that they were repaid; His Majesty, Louis XVI., having been graciously pleased to permit them to place the amount of the loan in the French funds, merely allowing a miserable interest for the investment of capital that saved one of their fleets from destruction. Thus did my father become an involuntary *rentier* in the French stocks.

Towards the latter end of the year 1789, my father returned to London, bearer of one of the keys of the Bastille, which he was commissioned to give to some person in England, I think to Tom Paine, or Perry, of the Chronicle;

and he moreover showed with exultation a fragment of stone, collected in the ruins of the captured fortress.

We were now made acquainted with his determination of removing his family to Paris, and he forthwith proceeded to sell all his goods and chattels. My brother, who was to have been sent to College, left Westminster school. I was to have been booked as a guinea-pig on board an Indiaman, commanded by a friend of my father's, a Captain Purvis, as I was considered so stupid and perverse, as to be unfit for anything else. Thus were all the plans of our future career in life changed by the great political event that threatened every institution in the world with destruction, and was likely to subvert in time every established government and engulph all hereditary possessions.

My father looked upon France as an *El Dorado* of freedom and abundance. My poor mother foresaw nothing but misery and ruin—her forebodings were but too sadly realized!

In the beginning of the year 1790, we left England. The political horizon was beginning

to darken in portentous clouds, and my father, with every other *patriot*, expected that the British nation would soon follow the example of their Gallic neighbours.

CHAPTER II.

First impressions in France—Van de Niver—French cookery—Vulgar taste—National Guard—*Royal Bonbons*—Lafayette—Cromwell Grandison—Remains of the Bastille—The Royal Family—Mirabeau—His death and obsequies—The *Véto*—The *Calotins*—Flight to Varennes—Drouet—Horror of a Republican embrace—Taught the piano—Abbé Servois—Abbé Grégoire—Thomas Paine—Anacharsis Clootz—State of Paris—Popular excitement and enthusiasm—Newspapers—Festivities of the Federation.

If the first visit to a foreign land surprises the traveller, from the difference of the customs, *costumes*, and character of its inhabitants, when compared to those of his countrymen, although merely divided by a narrow channel, a shallow stream, or conventional boundaries; to a child, the change appears the effect of a magic power.

The contrast between England and France is perhaps more striking than any that may be observed in the different countries of Europe; for, although the lower orders may still preserve their national costume, the upper classes exhibit but a trifling variation from the adopted dress and habitudes of what are called civilized people.

Never shall I forget my amazement when I landed at Calais; but I was more particularly struck with the wooden shoes of the people—the dirty white uniform and the miserable appearance of the soldiery—the curious garb of priests and monks; young as I was, a gloom hung over me: without any tie to my native country, still I felt regret in leaving it, as though I had been attached to it by affection or by prejudice. The merry chimes of the Hôtel de Ville's belfry (which any one who has visited Calais may remember) could not enliven me. I think that I must have shed many a bitter tear without knowing why. We put up at Meurice's Hotel, and, wandering about the court-yard, my first French acquaintance was a raven, who was hopping about, and seemed to welcome me with

an ominous flapping of his sable wings. In 1801, I found the bird still alive, and he positively appeared to recognise me; he was old and blind; but, turning towards me his dark eyes, he seemed to say, "Alas! I foretold you long ago all that was to befall you!"*

We had brought over our own carriage, and proceeded on our journey by what was called posting; the jack-boots of our postillion appeared to me a most extraordinary contrivance, as I could with ease have slipped into one of them. But objects of greater amazement soon caused me much wonder. After the fertile and variegated scenes of Kent that we had traversed, the plains we crossed appeared a desert—gloomy and deso-

* There is something singularly sinister in this bird, despite his apparent merry hop. A very delightful lady of my acquaintance, Mrs. M— G—n—, fancies that the souls of depraved clergymen assume their appearance, and, as though they were aware both of their transmigration and of her views of the matter, ravens invariably recognise her the moment they perceive her. Some time ago she went to visit the Tower, and, observing two or three of these birds at their meal, she said she was certain they would fly at her. She had scarcely uttered these words, when they attacked her, flapped their wings about her, and pecked her with bitter animosity.

late; the corn-fields, extending to the boundary of the horizon, were covered with stubble; and the interminable roads, called by the French soldiers, from their constant and endless turnings, *rubans de queue*—or pig-tail ribands—bordered with lofty, leafless elms, seemed to lead the Lord knows where. For miles and miles, nothing altered the sameness of the aspect, save an old grey *château*, and here and there, at considerable intervals, under the protection of a sloping ground and in a dirty dell, stood a few mud cottages, surrounded by a clump of elder-trees. The only appearance of any comfort in the dreary waste, were a few seats on the road-side, on which the weary traveller might rest his aching limbs. The villages we passed through were imbedded in muck, and the squalid peasantry seemed more dirty than their dwellings. We often stopped to change horses, and entered their wretched abodes. The black bread, made chiefly of rye and fern, struck me with disgust; and, on asking my father how it came to pass, that, in a country apparently so rich in corn, such coarse food could be found, he replied that

the wheaten bread was for the use of the nobility and clergy. Could I doubt it when I beheld men, women, and children yoked to the plough?

On our arrival in Paris, we took up our abode at the Hôtel de France, in the Rue Vivienne, kept by an old lady of the name of Angibault, a dame of the *old régime*, and who, although she was no doubt glad to receive travellers, seemed surprised that any rational person should bring over his family in such fearful times. Her house was opposite that of M. van de Niver, a Dutch banker, a connexion of my mother's, who had been mainly instrumental in bringing my father to France, for he was also a Batavian Republican, and hailed the Revolution as a most auspicious event, little suspecting that he and his sons would be numbered amongst the early victims of its excesses.*

We dined three or four times a week at the worthy banker's. He kept an admirable table, and I was much amused at all the strange

* This Hotel is at present partly occupied by the Galignanis.

scenes that I daily witnessed. I recollect there were no knives at table; many of the guests pulled one out of their pockets, or were handed one by their servants, who stood behind their chairs, in what appeared to me, grotesque liveries.

Inviting company to dinner in those days was most expensive, as every guest brought his servant with him. The remains of the dinner were then sold to the keepers of little eating-houses; and, in many instances, these *gargotiers'* stalls were in front of some of the most sumptuous hotels. Strange contrast between a Sybarite luxury and the most abject poverty! Yet, to the credit of the French *peuple*, it must be admitted that they never seemed to repine at their lot. In all their outbreakings, they never appeared to be influenced by any ambitious desire of improving their condition by imitating their superiors in life; nay, if they had possessed better garments, they would have scorned to wear them; and had the most sumptuous repasts been spread before them, they no doubt would have relished their dainties, but

have returned without any feeling of regret to their usual fare. In their desperate struggles, the people seemed to have sought only for a share in the rights of every citizen—for work and for food. Hence, in all their excesses, in all their bloody deeds, they rarely robbed to enrich themselves.

The only change in our mode of living, to which I got rapidly reconciled, was the cookery ; although my taste, in general, was of a very vulgar nature—for, when at home in England, as we were allowed to order our own dinner on our birth-days, I recollect that, while my brother named various dainties—fish, game, and wild fowl—I asked for tripe, a lamb's fry, bacon and cabbage, and a *trifle*, the only aristocratic nicety that I fancied.

My poor mother's chief distress was the want of tea—it was then only to be procured at the apothecary's, until our friend, Van de Niver, recommended us to a grocer of the name of Piébot, in the Rue Montmartre, where this scarce article was to be found.

It was soon arranged that my brother was to

enter the banking-house as a clerk, and I was to be sent to school. By a strange diversity of pursuits, my brother, although constantly applying himself to numismatic study, had always wished to be an engineer. This predilection, however, had been overruled on account of his bad health. He had suffered from asthma at an early period, and he was thought unfit for a military career.

The French metropolis, at this period, presented scenes of constant confusion and excitement. The National Guard was embodied; even children were formed into batallions, in a corps nominally commanded by the Dauphin, and therefore called *Royal Bonbons.* The little fellows were in uniform; their tiny grenadiers wore bear-skin caps, and their pigmy officers strutted about with all the pomp of vain-glorious conquerors. They had a train of light one-pounders attached to them, and I felt great delight in seeing them manœuvring in the Champs Elysées.

My father was constantly rambling about the busy streets, the squares, and gardens, and

frequently took me with him in his perambulations. In these wanderings we often met Lafayette; he was the idol of the people, who thronged round him, shouting the most uproarious *vivas*; and, on his white horse, he appeared to me something supernatural. We went to see the royal family dine in state; I beheld the unfortunate King and Queen, the Dauphin, the Princess Royal, surrounded with all the pomp of royal grandeur; but, young as I was, I looked upon them as insignificant personages when compared to Lafayette. My father appeared pleased with this sentiment; not so my mother and brother; the former told me that the King was an anointed of the Lord; my brother seemed to worship Marie Antoinette, and I recollect his making use of a singular expression on the subject:—"Should that glorious woman," he exclaimed, "go out riding, I should like to crawl on the ground, that she might step upon me to mount her horse." Thus, from childhood, my brother was a worshipper of royalty, while my sentiments (if, at that period of life, I could have entertained

any distinct idea on the subject) were essentially democratic. In after life, my brother was a decided liberal.

Amongst the daily rumours that were circulated, it was currently reported that Louis XVI. intended to collect an army on the heights commanding Paris, and bring the populace to a sense of their duty. My brother gloried in the idea, and exulted in the prospects of reducing the city to ashes, unless the rebels submitted; but Lafayette and the National Guard appeared to me invincible. There was a prestige of superiority—I might almost say of innate superiority—that, like a distinctive halo, crowned this popular chief. If it be true that there can exist any physical distinction between the patrician and the plebeian—any sign of gentle blood in form and feature—Lafayette did not belie his distinguished birth. He looked essentially aristocratic, even when mixing familiarly amongst the very lowest orders. He seemed to be the idol of the multitude. I recollect him well; his affable smile, his ingratiating manner, his dignified calmness, amidst surrounding con-

flicts, that threatened the destruction of all social order, gave him a power of fascination that could lay the gathering storm.

In this he might have succeeded, had he not committed a great fault, by producing a feeling of hostility between the National Guard and the people—trusting to the armed force for the repression of excesses. The people, therefore, soon looked upon the burgher guard as an aristocratic and privileged body, which had something to lose, and therefore, something to protect. It was from this circumstance that, in many of the numerous outbreaks of the reckless and heedless rabble, the National Guard neither *did* nor *could* repress their turbulence. They were citizens, divided in interests and opinions, and only uniting for security: whereas their opponents formed numerous masses, inspired by one sentiment—havoc and revenge—and at the orders of any faction that paid them, or excited their evil passions. Had Lafayette amalgamated the National Guard with the people, it would have been a much wiser plan, and might possibly have guarded the country

against many future fearful contingencies, as the fusion might have neutralized many of the mistaken notions of the lower orders. The effects of example and discipline are most powerful, even when a rabble is submitted to their influence; for, under such circumstances, an organized mob can be inspired with notions of honour and generous feelings, for nothing drives to desperation more promptly than a degrading sense of despised isolation arising from poverty and birth.

Had he been an ambitious man—had he wished to become a dictator at the head of the armed force of France—there perhaps was a time when Lafayette might have saved the country from the horrors that were to spread desolation and dismay over the land; but he was a patriot, in the full and honest acceptation of the word; incapable of conducting a base intrigue, or of coping with intriguers. He was accused of being a waverer, and undecided in action when surrounded by obstacles that could only be overcome *per fas et nefas*. Most undoubtedly, had Lafayette betrayed the trust reposed in him by

the people, he might have saved Louis XVI., and exposed his country to all the horrors of a foreign invasion, and the revenge of the royalists; while, on the other hand, had he not been attached to the unfortunate King, whom he hoped to see reigning in the hearts of his subjects, a constitutional sovereign,* he might have joined the party of the infuriated democrats, and precipitated the fall of the monarchy. It was the usual gentle bearing of Lafayette, which made Mirabeau, who suspected him of aiming at a dictatorship, call him *Cromwell Grandison*.

Young as I was, I participated in the general enthusiasm that welcomed this patriotic Commander of the National Guard wherever he appeared. The excitement at that period was most fearful. Thousands crowded to behold the ruins of the Bastille, and my father led me to contemplate this fallen fortress of tyrannic power. In the ruined dungeons

* Lafayette had, no doubt, imbibed Republican principles in America; but he looked upon a constitutional monarchy as a rational and safe Republic, and he deemed it immaterial whether the chief magistrate was called a President or a King.

close to the ditch, and infested with water-rats, toads, and other reptiles, were still to be seen stones, on which had reposed the unfortunate prisoners doomed to expire in the *oubliettes*, forgotten by all the world, condemned to be buried alive, and the iron rings to which their chains had been fastened were still riveted in the flinty couch, which from the constant friction and pressure of the unhappy victims of despotism, bore the impression of their aching limbs.

The prisoners found in those dismal vaults, with grisly and snow-white beards, of many a year's growth, blanched from the privation of light and air, were still triumphantly paraded about the streets, scarcely able to drag along their tottering limbs, crippled by long imprisonment and inaction. Two skeletons found in the dungeons, with chains and a cannon ball on their ankles, were also exhibited; and such scenes were well calculated to inspire the most indifferent citizens with a patriotic enthusiasm, an indignant spirit prompt to avenge their wrongs, and bring to condign punishment the perpetrators of such

iniquities. Man could scarcely believe that he lived in times, when any power could have thus trampled on his rights. The heart sickened at the view of such a fearful abuse of authority—the more so, as, although it might frequently have been suspected and spoken of, its effects were still occult. But now that the people had overthrown the walls of this hateful Pandemonium, its horrors were exaggerated in all the high colouring of party spirit and revengeful eloquence.

The dark and dismal pile had long been viewed with dismay. The humblest artisan passing by its moat, although his position in life did not expose him to be immured in its dungeons, shuddered with an unaccountable feeling of dread, as the superstitious peasant glides by a haunted castle when night sets in, tremblingly recollecting stories of goblins and mischievous elves. Such was the Bastille; and, in storming its formidable works, the people imagined that they had carried the stronghold of despotism.

At this period, with the exception of those

who were associated with arbitrary power, the whole nation experienced that maddening exultation that would inspire captives doomed to eternal seclusion from the world, in all the horrors of solitude, hunger, thirst, and oblivion; whose chains had been broken by some magic power, and who were now commanded by a voice from Heaven—the voice of Liberty—to hurl destruction on their former merciless oppressors.

Such were the Royal Family represented to the people, by the leaders of the political movement. They were told that the Comte d'Artois and the emigrant Princes were imploring the different sovereigns of Europe, not only to restore the overthrown tyranny from which they had just escaped, but to punish, to exterminate, every one, who, directly or indirectly, either by his actions or his influence, had assisted in the downfall of despotism.

To increase the fermentation, provisions were becoming scarce, and a famine was apprehended. This was also attributed to the Court and its partizans, who were accused of stopping the supplies that were proceeding to Paris, for

the purpose of starving its inhabitants. The Court was even charged with poisoning the bread that was distributed to the *Gardes Françaises*, for having joined the popular movement. In the gardens of the Palais Royal, in the Tuileries, in streets and squares, public orators were exciting the people collected in groups around them, to wage a war of destruction against the Court and the aristocracy. Mirabeau in the *tribune*, Camille Desmoulins in the byways and the highways, displayed all the powers of their commanding eloquence; and history records the apostrophe of Mirabeau to the Marseillois. "When the last of the Gracchi expired, he flung dust towards heaven, and from this dust sprung Marius, not so renowned for having exterminated the Cimbri, as for having annihilated the aristocracy of Rome!"

One of the most singular anomalies in the character of the French people is their rapid transition from the worship of a popular idol to its execration and destruction. Their Kings were at one time gods, and soon after, demons.

They believed implicitly all they were told of their benevolence and glory, as well as the most idle reports of their perfidiousness and cruelty. This was instanced in the case of Louis XV. as well as during the reign of his successor: at one time he was Louis *le bien aimé*, and soon after, the populace credited the report that, for the restoration of his health in the hateful *Parc aux Cerfs*, he bathed in the blood of little children who were kidnapped for the purpose!

My father was a great admirer of Mirabeau, and, during the illness that terminated his singular and erratic career, he used to send me and a servant every day to his hôtel, to bring a report of the *bulletin*, published to satisfy the thousands who surrounded his house. I recollect hearing of a student, who offered to have his young blood drawn from him, if its transfusion in the veins of the sick patriot could prolong his precious life.

The last moments of this extraordinary man might be called Anacreontic,—he asked for

music, begged to be sprinkled with perfumes, covered with garlands of flowers, and requested that opium might be dropped in his goblet of wine, to usher him to eternal sleep.

His obsequies I can well remember. The *cortège* extended from the Chaussée d'Antin to the Boulevard du Temple, and the dense mass of citizens of every class of society, must have numbered three or four hundred thousand. The body was borne on a funeral car, drawn by eight black horses, and covered with a pall of black velvet, studded with silver stars, surmounted by a figure of Fame. The mass of mourners gradually increased during the procession to the church of St. Geneviève—then transformed into a National Pantheon. Strange anomaly in the history of men and of nations, when we behold one of the most corrupt and profligate debauchés casting a veil of universal mourning over the entire country! The child of materialism endowed with immortality! spiritualizing eternal dust!

We had a footman of the name of *Coté*, a most determined democrat, and, to improve me

in the French language, he was allowed to take me with him, and certainly he did introduce me into the most motley society of *fleuristes*, *enlumineuses*, &c. It may be easily imagined that I soon became an enthusiastic demagogue. I wore, much to the annoyance of my mother and brother, an enormous tricoloured cockade, and, without the most distant notion of what it meant, called the King and Queen, Monsieur and Madame *Veto*.

This outcry of *Veto*, which formed the burthen of speech and of song, especially of the *Carmagnole*, was one of the strange absurdities of those fearful times. Strictly speaking, the term applied to the power with which the monarchic party wished to invest the sovereign, of opposing, either by a suspensive or absolute *Veto*, the decisions of the National Assembly. Some of the people, however, conceived that *Veto* meant a vexatious taxation; others gave it an impersonation, and loudly demanded that *Veto* should be given up to the people and hanged; and it is related that a countryman, when discussing the matter

with another peasant, explained this obnoxious power by asserting, that if a man had his plate full of porridge, and the King ordered him to throw it away, *Veto* would compel him to do it without delay. Others maintained, that if a nobleman wanted to claim his *droit du Seigneur*, *Veto* would oblige the husband to give up his lovely bride!

The Revolution, in fact, was now assuming the form of a living being—but it was still in its infancy—weak, helpless, undecided, and, like the ocean, terrible from its instability—its ebbing and flowing required dykes and dams—and there was no one able to undertake the gigantic and problematic labour, and check the headlong course of the torrent.

In short, every lever was applied to raise the populace, and even the middle classes, on the fulcrum of terror; and since it was undoubtedly believed, that the court party and the clergy, assisted by the emigrants, who endeavoured, chiefly at Coblentz, to arm all Europe against their mother country, and were determined not only to restore the despotic power of

absolute monarchy, but to exterminate all those who had contributed to its fall, the *Aristocrats* and the *Calotins*, as the priests were called—from the black calotte, or skull-cap that covered the crown of their heads, the nobility and clergy, and all about the Court, became objects of general execration; while bribes scattered amongst the people and the Federalists who had flocked to Paris, and approaching famine and foreign invasion, produced constant excitement, and the supposed, or real authors of these calamities, were in constant danger of being sacrificed to public indignation.

While the people were thus exasperated against the aristocracy, the nobles, on their side, seemed determined to feed the fire that was to consume them, by every insulting and aggravating means in their power. Thus, when letters of nobility were abolished, and armorial bearings prohibited, many imprudent aristocrats had a cloud painted over the armorials on their carriages, intimating that it was only a passing mist that obscured their glory; others, liveries being also forbidden, dressed their

laquais and their coachmen in the most fantastic manner; and I recollect seeing destroyed on the Boulevard de la Madeleine, by the populace, a Berline, on the panels of which a passing cloud had been depicted, while two footmen behind it were dressed as *Pierrots* (the French clowns), the owner of the vehicle escaping the fury of the mob with the greatest difficulty.

Child as I was, I partook of the general opinion, despite the admonitions of my mother, who was constantly asserting the sacred inviolability of the Sovereign. When the King was brought back, after his flight to Varennes, I was walking with her on the Boulevard of the Bains Chinois, when Drouet, the post-master of Sainte Ménéhould, who had stopped the fugitive royal family, crowned with a wreath of laurels, was conducted about the streets amidst popular bursts of enthusiasm. Every woman the mob met was obliged to kiss the supposed saviour of the country, and my poor mother, despite her remonstrance in broken French, was compelled to submit to the rude embrace, which was reiterated amidst

shouts of laughter: when the poor, dear soul wiped her mouth and face, shedding bitter tears, amidst roars of *c'est une Anglaise! c'est une Anglaise!*

On her return home, followed by the mob, my poor mother was in a sad state of dismay, insisted on immediately going back to England, and was most indignant with me, when I declared that I could have kissed Drouet myself, for having taken up Monsieur and Madame *Veto.*

Nor was this sentiment surprising, when we consider the state of Paris on this melancholy occurrence. The flight of the Royal Family had excited a general indignation, mingled with terror—indignation at what was considered the breach of the monarch's solemn engagement—terror, when it was asserted that Louis was to return at the head of foreign armies to chastise France. The populace were roving about the streets in frantic turbulence—effigies of the King and Queen were carried about and burnt, while the mob danced round the *auto-da-fe*, singing "*Ah ça irà*," and "*La Carmagnole.*" Wooden

heads, fantastically dressed up, with straw stuffed in their mouths, representing the Monarch and Marie Antoinette, were carried about stuck upon pikes, and wherever the word *Royal* was inscribed over theatres, lottery offices, tobacconists, &c. &c., it was effaced with mud or paint, and every symbol of royalty was dashed to pieces, or torn down by the infuriated multitude. I well recollect the morning after the flight, our porter came into our apartment, and, in language not very polite, informed us that "*Les Capets ont f—s le camp.*" My father instantly observed, "*Then all is over.*" Prophetic words, that, at this distance of time, still resound in my ears!

We then lived in the Rue de la Michaudière, in the same house with Viotti, the celebrated violin-player. He used to have quartettes on Sundays, to which he was kind enough to invite me and my father, despite my mother, who considered it a desecration of the Sabbath.

Viotti was a stanch democrat, and was ordered out of England at a subsequent period (I think in 1800), for his violent revolutionary principles.

My father was exceedingly fond of music, particularly of the Italian school, and Pergolese and Anfossi were his favourite composers. It was thought I showed a disposition for music, and a master of the name of Beuré was taken to teach me the harpsichord. This Monsieur Beuré I held in utter detestation : when he first came, he was dressed in a black suit, with a bag-wig and sword ; a costume which appeared to me most ridiculous. My progress with him was very slow, and I was much pleased when a master of the name of Nadderman, a plain, honest German, succeeded the powdered and aristocratic Frenchman. With my new teacher I got on better, and was soon able to play the great test of improvement—the Battle of Prague. At this time, instead of progressive exercises, the custom was to teach at once sonatas, but more especially overtures ; and I soon strummed, *tant bien que mal*, those of *Blaisé et Babet*, *La Caravane*, *Iphigénie en Aulide ;* but I must confess my favourite practice was in playing *Ah ça irà ! La Carmagnole*, and *La Marseillaise*.

Fortunate, indeed, would it have been for me, if, instead of being sent to a day-school, where I learnt less than nothing, I had been placed in a regular college; but colleges were now broken up. *Ecoles Primaires* were open, and it was decided that I should receive lessons from a private tutor. The one selected for me was my ever dear friend, Abbé Servois, who then lived in the Place Dauphine, in the *Cité*. This amiable man was a little hunchback, and he looked most undignified in his *soutane*, buttoned from his chin down to the skirt; but his countenance was most expressive, and under this uncouth form beat the most generous and patriotic heart, that ever could endear a man to country and to friends. When the head-quarters of the British army were at Cambrai, Servois was Vicar-General of the diocese, and private secretary to Delmas, the Archbishop. I have heard that the Duke of Wellington particularly noticed him when at the Episcopal Palace, for he spoke a little English, which he had gradually learned from me. He was the translator of "Chandler's

Travels in Greece," which my brother had placed in his hands.

Abbé Servois had taken the civic oath, and was therefore excommunicated by the non-jurors. He was appointed to a curacy at the *Petits Pères*, the church of which was afterwards the meeting-place of the *Section de Guillaume Tell*, and some of the most energetic and constitutional speeches were delivered in that assembly by my eloquent friend, whose patriotic fire seemed to inspire every one around him with a love of country and of order.

He brought to our house his own particular friend, Abbé Daire, and also Bishop Grégoire, and Royer, afterwards Archbishop of Paris. About the same time, Thomas Paine and Anacharsis Clootz were also frequent visitors; and it was surrounded by these remarkable men, that my unconnected notions of democracy assumed a more concrete form, and, I became, in heart and soul a thorough Republican. I attributed all the miseries of mankind to arbitrary power. I could not understand how such a

glaring disparity in rank and fortune—such painful contrasts between splendid luxury and squalid misery could exist, unless it were the work of evil men. Fraternity and equality—words that were constantly ringing in my ears—I looked upon as Divine dictates; and, brought up myself with notions of religion narrow and circumscribed, I may say that my reason gradually soared to a loftier contemplation of the duties of man both towards his Creator and his fellows. I, therefore, young as I was, felt an instinctive aversion to despotism and priestcraft, and my excellent tutor impressed upon my mind, that in the sublime doctrines of Christianity were to be found the fundamental principles of those bonds of society that tyranny had burst asunder.

Such must have been the case, when I incessantly heard the conduct of the unfortunate Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette discussed and commented on—of daily surrenders made to the people—proclamations against emigration and emigrants promulgated; and, finally, war against Austria declared, when, at the very

same time the Queen and the Court party corresponded with the Allied Powers and the absent nobility, and endeavoured to accelerate, by all the means in their power, the invasion of the country, and the chastisement of every one who had aided the revolutionary movement. Such perfidious conduct aroused my feelings of hatred towards all those who, I understood, intended to wreak their vengeance on an entire nation, and threatened to destroy Paris so effectually, that, to use their own expressions, children should ask their parents where it had once stood!

I had seen heads carried upon pikes, with straw stuffed in their mouths. My horror ceased when I was told that they had been struck off the bodies of men who had starved the people, and maintained that straw was good enough for them. Such was the case of the unfortunate and silly Foulon, whose mouth was crammed with hay, in allusion to his unguarded expressions that the people should "be mowed down." I had seen three or four men killed and hanged in the streets by the mob; but I thought

that they deserved their fate, when I heard that they had corresponded with the enemies of the country, to bring in *les hordes étrangères, ivres de sang et d'orgueil.*

In such times of universal excitement, of virulent antagonistic action and reaction, it is difficult for contemporary writers and prejudiced or interested eye-witnesses to pronounce the condemnation of a nation, driven to desperation by every possible means;—menaced from within with extermination by the nobility, the clergy, and the Court, and from without by a host of departed nobles; when the King's own brother, and all the armies of Europe, had decreed the destruction of France. No doubt many of the leaders of the popular, or I should say the national movement, distributed bribes to the lower orders; and I have often heard my father say, that he thought that the Duc d'Orleans was the chief fomenter of these scenes of fearful discord; but subsequent observation and reflection have convinced me that such was not the case. Many of the assassins were bribed to commit the most horrible murders; but millions could

not have produced the spontaneous energies of the French people, when they heard that they were doomed to annihilation.

It was generally reported and believed that these bribes were distributed by England, to revenge herself for the treachery of the Court of France, in having assisted the Americans in throwing off their allegiance; and it was also said that it was the Duke of Orleans who received these secret sums in London and brought them over. It is no doubt true, that the French revolution had many partisans in England, and several Englishmen, who had advocated the popular cause, were made French citizens, amongst others Thomas Paine.

But this system of corruption could never be brought home to our Government, which was also accused of having bribed the mob in several seaports to murder their best naval officers. So far from the British Government having acted in an unfair and ungenerous manner towards France, it had given it a moral lesson, by returning good for evil; for, notwithstanding the perfidious conduct of the Bourbons in the affairs of America, when

the Royalist party offered to surrender Brest to England, our Minister immediately communicated the project to the French Cabinet.

Maugre the *Anglomania* that was then prevalent in Paris, the most absurd reports were circulated of the monstrous designs of Pitt, and afterwards, of Cobourg, and when bread rose or a conspiracy was discovered, it was immediately attributed to the "*infames projets de Pitt et de Cobourg !*"

No words could describe the popular enthusiasm when a foreign invasion was expected. Every one flew to arms; pikes were fabricated by millions—every weapon that could arm a soldier—musket, pistol, fowling-piece, sword, or couteau de chasse, was deposited by the owner on the altar of the country in every Section. Women, young and old, and little children, assembled by thousands in the churches, to make up linen for the army, and lint and bandages for the wounded; while every man who had two pairs of shoes, gave up one of them for the use of the volunteers proceeding to defend the frontiers. At the same time, leaden coffins

were torn out of the vaults, the remains of the dead scattered in the street, until the atmosphere was putrid, while the lead was cast into bullets, and little children were taught to make cartridges. The walls of the cellars of every house were regularly scraped, to be run into a lixivium for the extraction of saltpetre. The National Guard were drilled day and night, both in the manual and platoon exercise, and the use of artillery; while thousands flocked to the heights of Montmartre, Montrouge, and other points covering the capital, on which field-works were thrown up. Thither they carried their humble meals in a basket, and worked from break of day until dark, with spade, mattock, and pick-axe. When exhausted with toil, they staggered to their distant homes, still singing the burthen of the *Marseillaise.*

Most of the days were thus occupied in national preparations for defence. Mournful and dismal were the nights! Reports were constantly circulated that the Faubourgs of St. Antoine and St. Marceau were on the march to attack the Palace, and murder all the

aristocrats. Then the drum of the National Guard would beat to arms in every direction, the *tocsin* toll in every church, and crowds rush through the streets crying, "*Lampions! Lampions!*"* when every citizen was obliged to place one in each window.

Jacobin newspapers were now circulated in every quarter, calling on the people to destroy their domestic enemies before they proceeded to exterminate their foreign foes. Amongst the most virulent were *le Père Duchêne*, conducted by Hébert and Manuel; *l'Ami du Peuple*, of Marat; Prudhomme's "Révolutions de Paris;" Camille Desmoulins' "Discours de la Lanterne;" and not only were these journals thrown into immense circulation, but they were occasionally placarded on the walls for general perusal. Every passion that could drive to acts of desperate daring was excited, and the whole population of Paris kept in a state of

* *Lampions* were pans containing tallow, with a thick cotton wick dipped in spirits of turpentine. They were generally used for the purpose of illuminations in festivals, &c.

feverish fermentation. Proclamations from the Sections were stuck upon every wall, urging the people to maintain peace and order, while each hour announced invasion and the rapid advance of the enemy.

Battalions of volunteers, many of them boys of fourteen or fifteen, without uniform, badly armed, without appointments or ncessariees, were marching against the enemy. Their mothers, their sisters, their sweethearts were clinging round them, bathed in tears, and pouring forth execrations on the heads of the authors of all their misery; and bitter were the pangs of eternal separation, when nightfall obliged them to bid farewell to all they held dear in life, and mothers, smothering their grief, gave a parting kiss to their sons, and exhorted them to conquer or aie. Alas! on their return to their desolate hearth, they did not even find bread to eat; when, to use their own disconsolate expressions, they exclaimed, "*they had nothing left them but eyes to weep!*"

These scenes are as vivid in my recollection as though they had been of recent occurrence.

With my faithful *Coté*, I also used to lend my feeble hand to the entrenchments of Paris, only regretting that I was not old enough to join the departing legions. How fondly I gazed on their new colours—red, blue, and white, with a fasces surmounted by a cock—the symbol of vigilance; and on their banners was inscribed, in golden letters, *La Nation! La Loi et le ROI!*—the very monarch who was inciting the legions of Europe to exterminate those generous bands, that but a short time before would have fought knee deep in blood to defend him against popular outrage.

In the first years of the Revolution, the overthrow of the monarchy was not contemplated by the people, although a Republican form of Government might have been the vision of many Utopian politicians. The violent Camille Desmoulins declared that at that period there were not ten of the *journalistes* of France who were Republicans. The press did not endeavour to overthrow royalty, but to strenghten local power by a federative union of the country, and a national representation. Robespierre himself

was obliged to admit that a spirit of Republicanism had crept into parties, he knew not how; in fact, it was only when an actual government had ceased to exist, that the people endeavoured to govern themselves —like landsmen, obliged to seize the helm of a vessel abandoned by the crew, although entirely ignorant of the science of navigation, and without a compass or a chart.

So far from the King's being disliked, he was considered a weak Prince, deceived by the Austrian Queen and the profligate Court that surrounded him. As a proof of this being the case, whenever the monarch appeared in public, and endeavoured by fair persuasion to soothe popular excitement, he not only was received with loud acclamations of devotion, but on many occasions, when the unfortunate man seemed affected by passing events and the wants of the people, tears of gratitude were shed by the very refuse of the rabble; and never can I forget the joy—the frantic joy—of the multitude on the Federation of the anniversary of the 14th of July, in the Champ

de Mars, when the King swore to maintain the Constitution, and the Queen held up the Dauphin to the populace, as a pledge of the sincerity of their oaths! Men, women, and children, citizens and soldiers, priests and laymen, were embracing each other with tears of delight; and, for three days and nights, public festivities, dancing and banqueting were going on, amid shouts of *Vive la Nation! Vive le Roi!* although during the first two days and nights the rain was falling in torrents. Poor *Coté* got into sad disgrace on this occasion, for he had taken me, with some *demoiselles de sa connaissance*, to the Champ de Mars, where we all indulged in *cervelats à l'ail*, *galettes* and *échaudés* with sour wine and *bonne bière de Mars, à discrétion;* and to the great terror of my dear mother, we only came home on the following morning, when my worthy guide would have been turned away but for my entreaties.

CHAPTER III.

Affair of the Champ de Mars—Bailly—Anacharsis Clootz—Apotheosis of Voltaire—Dramatic spectacle—General corruption and demoralization—Its causes——My education—Auricular confession—Black and white pebbles—Les Gamins de Paris make their first appearance—Barra and Viala—Popularity—Barnave—His attachment to the Queen—Fickleness of the French.

THE excitement produced by the flight of the Royal Family, and the subsequent decree of the Assembly, that declared their inviolability, far from subsiding, became every day more and more alarming; not only to the Court party, but to the Constitutionalists; the clubs and the majority of the people loudly demanded a Republican form of government, and the punishment of the perjured monarch.

Several Englishmen at this period frequented our house; among them was Thomas Paine, who drew up an address to the French people, under a fictitious name. In this insidious production, he insisted that the King had, *de facto*, abdicated, and that the short absence of the monarch had produced an *interregnum* far more desirable for the future welfare of the country than his perfidious misrule. I recollect this address was read at my father's, who then received Horne Tooke, Macintosh, Williams, and other English gentlemen, with Anacharsis Clootz, a most extraordinary foreigner, with long bushy hair, and who appeared to me, by the violence of his franctic gestures, to be out of his mind. He was the first person I saw who wore a red Phrygian cap—the emblem of liberty—which was afterwards generally adopted.

These Englishmen were in constant correspondence with the London society for Constitutional Reform; and Fox, Francis, Whitbread, Courtnay, Grey, Sheridan, were members of this association, that had presented a congratulatory address to the National Assembly,

after the events of the 10th of August. Thomas Paine spoke French very indifferently, and, although his "Age of Reason," and other works, had been translated, and were much admired, he was considered at that period a visionary incendiary, and even Robespierre, when speaking of him, said: "The fire of this Englishman is not calculated to illumine, but to consume."

The affair of the Champ de Mars, when Bailly unfurled the red flag, and Lafayette ordered the National Guard to fire on the people, who were assembled on the altar of the country, to sign an address to the Assembly, demanding the deposition of the King, added to the general exasperation. It was rumoured that four thousand men, women, and children, had been killed and wounded—a preposterous exaggeration; still a great number of dead, and many persons grievously wounded, were carried by our door, followed by a multitude, vociferating the most fearful maledictions on the King, Bailly and Lafayette. Incapable of forming a judgment on this fatal occurrence, I must confess that I partook of the general indignation, which

denounced the authors of what was called "the massacre of the people" to public vengeance; and the American hero lost, in my mind, much of his former popularity. Yet, I recollect my father thought otherwise. In fact, the National Guard was chiefly composed of citizens, who had something to protect; and, when it was intimated that the inhabitants of the Faubourgs, under Santerre, the brewer, meditated not only the destruction of the Palais, but the plunder of Paris, the Civic Force cheerfully dispersed the mob, and would have acted with still greater energy in their destruction, had it not been for Lafayette, who, on beholding the effect of the first volley of musquetry, threw himself before one of the guns, when the artillery was about opening its fire on the flying crowd. This event materially tended to widen the breach between the armed force and the populace.

I was but a child; but, alas! on such occasions, the majority of the masses are little better than children, and the sight of the mangled dead and the gory wounded operated more powerfully on my young mind, than my

father's sensible remarks, which were contrary to the opinions of most of our visitors, who, so far from condemning the fury of the people, seemed disposed to fan the flame of popular exasperation.

As usual during these fearful days, a festivity followed this deplorable event, and the attention of all Paris was drawn from the slaughter of the people, to the apotheosis of Voltaire—one of the most singular and imposing pageants that could be exhibited to an excited population. My father took me, on the preceding evening, to the place of the Bastille, where the remains of this illustrious writer, who might be considered as one of the most powerful promoters of the Revolution, were placed on a pedestal raised on the ruins of the very prison in which he had once been confined. The following day, the procession that accompanied his sarcophagus to the Pantheon, was as numerous as the mass of mourners who followed the mortal remains of Mirabeau. The whole was *got up* in theatrical style. All the actors and actresses, singers and dancers, of the different theatres, were grouped

round a statue of the philosopher, in the various costumes of his *dramatis personæ.* Zaïre was walking next to Mahomet, Julius Cæsar arm-in-arm with Œdipus, and Brutus with the widow of Malabar; while another group represented Calas and his family. One of the most singular objects in the procession was a portable press, which worked off various hand-bills, as the *cortége* proceeded, which were scattered amongst the people.* A numerous chorus was pouring forth the praises of the great man, and dancers,

* These slips bore analogous passages of his writings; thus on one was printed the lines in Mahomet:—

> Les hommes sont égaux, ce n'est point la naissance
> Mais la seule vertu qui fait leur différence.

On another:—

> Tu dors, Brutus! et Rome est dans les fers!

A third:—

> A de viles grandeurs ton âme accoutumée,
> Juge ainsi du mérite, et pèse les humains
> Au poid que la fortune avait mise en tes mains;
> Ne sais-tu pas encore! homme faible et superbe,
> Que l'insecte insensible enseveli sous l'herbe,
> Et l'aigle impérieux qui plâne au haut du ciel,
> Rentrent dans le néant aux yeux de l'Eternel?

decked with flowers, were grouping round them. All the houses in the streets through which the pageant passed were decorated with garlands, and the ropes of the *réverbères*, or street lamps, were festooned with oak leaves. The members of the Assembly, of the political clubs, the National Guards, the federal detachments from the departments, all the colleges and public schools, marched in array, with numerous flags and banners, bearing appropriate inscriptions; while the martial sounds of trumpets, drums, and military bands, were chiming with the ringing of bells and the booming of ordnance. The annals of literature never recorded a greater or a prouder triumph of human intellect, and the gigantic power of the press over fanaticism and bigotry.

The sarcophagus was borne on a gorgeous car, drawn by twelve white horses, splendidly caparisoned, preceded by twenty young girls in white robes, strewing flowers from golden baskets, and headed by Madame Villette, the daughter of M. Villette, in whose house, on the Quai des Augustins, since called Quai Voltaire,

the cynic scoffer expired. She was crowned with laurels, and bore a golden lyre. In front of every theatre, a *station* was erected, where hymns to his memory, written by Chenier and composed by Méhul and Gossec, were sung with enthusiasm. Over the Théâtre Français, since the Odéon, a statue of the great dramatist was placed on a pedestal, that bore the inscription,

"A 17 ans il écrivit Œdipe, à 83 ans il écrivit Irène."

My father had a fine edition of Voltaire's works, and, on my return from this imposing ceremony, I well recollect that I gazed on the volumes and the portrait of their gigantic author with a sort of worship, and I laid out my pocket-money in purchasing his bust, which my dear mother threw into the fire, calling Voltaire an infidel—an unbeliever, although she had never read a line of his writings. Abbé Servois had put into my hands the "Henriade," which I did not understand; and I am sorry to say, that the first production of his that fixed my

attention was the "Pucelle d'Orleans," a copy of which I found among my brother's books, and purloined to read on the sly.

It may be easily concluded that, during these disturbed times, my education was much neglected. As I have already stated, I was sent to a day-school, where I only learnt to read French, with the first rudiments of Latin. My tutor, Abbé Servois, after he had taken charge of me, made me write Latin themes and versions, and the first works placed in my hands were Cornelius Nepos, Phædrus, Cicero and Erasmus's Colloquies: but, being half my time in the streets, mixing, with my faithful Coté, in every mob and group, it is needless to add that, much to the annoyance of my instructor, I made but slow progress in my studies, to which was added the drawback of several hours applied to music and fencing.

Paris, at this time, presented a fearful spectacle of systematic demoralization. The Palais Royal was the theatre of every possible depravity. The *entresols* over every

shop in the lateral galleries were tenanted by prostitutes, who exhibited themselves at their windows during the day, and at night mingled in the crowd of Federalists from the departments, and young volunteers preparing to march, and taking leave of Parisian pleasures, while members of the various political clubs, more especially of the Cordeliers and Jacobins, joined the motley throng, and excited popular fermentation by every possible means. The *estaminets* and *cafés* were crowded with noisy politicians and blustering soldiers; and at every step the ears were assailed with blasphemous ribaldry, obscene songs, accompanied by the clang of steel scabbards rattling along the pavement, while the air was redolent with perfumes of half drunken girls and the smoke of infamous tobacco. At every corner of the galleries, ruffians were selling, at low prices, the most indecent works, the erotic poetry of Piron, the Abbés Chaulieu, Grécourt, Jean Baptiste Rousseau, &c. &c.; while, for the edification of those who were fond of classic

reading, the dialogues of Meursius, and the private life of the twelve Cæsars, with illustrations from antique intaglios and cameos, were widely circulated. It would appear that, while the writings of the Encyclopedists were sapping the foundations of the Christian religion, the most effectual means of destroying every moral principle of action were resorted to, by a party determined to construct the edifice of their ambition on the ruins of everything that had been considered sacred and respectable. Thus was the way paved for the worship of *Reason*, whose dogmas were the enjoyment of life. Terror and voluptuousness became the chief instruments of this demoralizing and destructive work. There must have existed a secret fund to bear the expences of the circulation of corruption, for these books were sold for a few *sous*, and could not possibly remunerate their publishers, even by the sale of large numbers, it being chiefly confined to the metropolis, and their vendors seemed more anxious to distribute the moral poison amongst

the younger part of the community, in whom its instillation might be more easily obtained. In short, universal corruption appeared the order of the day, while the words of virtue and wisdom were ever on the lips of the corruptors.

If I was then exposed to this baneful influence, my worthy mother did certainly exert, as heretofore, her best endeavours in administering antidotes. I was every morning and evening obliged to read aloud two chapters of the Old and New Testaments, in addition to which Bunyan's "Pilgrims' Progress," and "Holy Wars," the latter an epic poem, that ever delighted me, were also made the subjects of my perusal, with Saurin's excellent sermons, and Sturm's "*Considérations sur les Œuvres de Dieu.*" When Abbé Servois was selected as my tutor, it was expressly stipulated by my mother, that he was not to convert me to the Roman Catholic faith; and I must do the excellent man the justice to say, that he most religiously observed the compact: indeed, had I been of a disposition likely to be worked upon by bigotry, and by the romances of Popery,

the constant remarks that greeted my ears on that subject, were well calculated to make me consider Romanism in the light in which both my father and mother looked upon it. My father, who, I have already stated, had been on terms of intimacy when at Rome with Ganganelli (Clement XIV.), was as hostile to the Jesuits as that Pontiff, and, amongst the many grounds of dislike to the Romish faith, a most trivial circumstance added to my mother's antipathy. We had long suspected a servant-maid of many acts of dishonesty; my father called in a Commissary of Police to search her boxes, in which, in addition to various stolen articles, was found a little bag, containing black and white pebbles. When questioned as to the use of this collection, she admitted that they were for the purpose of confession; for, as her memory was somewhat treacherous, whenever she committed a capital sin, she popped in a black pebble, and a white one was the record of any venial delinquency. On confession days, therefore, she merely counted

her pebbles to her spiritual director, who imposed penitential exercises on the sum total, without the trouble of looking over items.

About this period, several Deputies of the National Assembly had openly asserted their disbelief in a God, while the refractory clergy were persecuting and exterminating the Constituent priests who had taken the civic oath. They had already kindled a civil and religious war in many provinces; and, in the midst of this confusion in theological matters, it was not easy for a youth to come to any distinct belief. I make use of the word youth, for I may say, I never passed through the transition of boyhood, but was ushered from childhood into precocious manhood, without partaking of the sports, and the joyous recreations of careless boyhood; for, while boys of my age generally applied their hours of relaxation to juvenile pastimes, I was mixed up in scenes of political convulsion and bloody strife. Lads of fourteen and fifteen were in arms, and many of the *gamins de Paris* had marched to the frontier. In the Vendée, two boys, of the name of Barra

and Viala, had saved a detachment of the Republican troops, by cutting away the ferry-rope of a raft, on which a body of the Royalists were crossing the Loire. They were both killed on the spot, and their remains removed in great pomp to the Panthéon, while their busts were carried about the streets, and hymns to their praise sung at every festival. One of these hymns was written by Chenier, and the music composed by Gossec. It ended by the following lines :—

> " Honneur, honneur à la mémoire
> De Barra, de Viala, morts pour la liberté,
> Et que nos chants de gloire,
> Montent jusqu'au séjour de l'immortalité !"

On another hand, while my dear mother, who sadly missed Mr. Martin, of Grafton Street Chapel, attended divine service in a Protestant church in the Rue Louis le Grand, in which a worthy minister of the name of Marolles officiated, my father was daily pondering over Voltaire, Raynal, Rousseau, Helvétius, and other philosophers of the school of universal reform.

It may be truly said that, during these disastrous events, no one seemed to entertain any decided opinion on any subject. Both the leaders of faction and their factious followers were vacillating in their views, and consequently in their conduct; and the man who was one day not only the favourite of the mob, but of the more intellectual portion of the community, became, in the fluctuation of public tergiversation, an object of inveterate hate. Thus Lafayette and Bailli, who were held up to general execration as the blood-thirsty murderers of the Champ de Mars, were again considered the saviours of their country, when the King accepted the Constitution, and the most ardent Republicans joined in the air-rending shout of *Vive le Roi!* Nay, the very Deputies of the Assembly, who on one day abolished the titles of *Sire* and *Majesty*, revoked their own decree the following evening, and received their Sovereign with enthusiastic raptures and cries of *Vive sa Majesté.* One might say, that the entire country laboured under a maniacal excitement, with a few moments of lucid intervals—alas! but few and far be-

tween!—Strange anomalies arose in this pernicious fickleness of mind. Thus we beheld Barnave, who had left Paris to bring back the royal family, and drag them perhaps to the scaffold, become enamoured with the beautiful Marie Antoinette, and, from having been her most bitter enemy, transformed into her devoted slave! How truly has it been said of this great, and at the same time this puny nation, that they united the ferocity of the tiger to the frivolity of the monkey! *Le tigre singe!*

In their insane manifestations, each party seemed determined to commit suicide, as if by self-destruction they fancied they could involve their enemies in the general ruin, like Sampson, sharing the fate of the crushed Philistines. The very aristocracy, in order to recover their power, excited and encouraged their foes to dark and desperate resolves, in the criminal hope that the excesses of the Jacobins and the Girondins would ultimately exhaust the country, and render it an easy prey to the avenging foreigner. Thus it must have been when, labouring under a paroxysm of suicidal

desperation, that Louis XVI. and his advisers offered to the Duke of Brunswick the post of Generalissimo of the French armies, with the prospect of his ultimately succeeding to the throne. The reply of that Prince must have read a fearful lesson to the tempters—"My blood is German, and my honour Prussia's! My ambition is satisfied with being the second person in that monarchy, which has adopted me; and I would not exchange for a doubtful glory and the chances of a revolution, the high position and the unsullied reputation that I have secured for myself in my fatherland."

CHAPTER IV.

Barthélemi—Barbier du Bocage — Denon—Walkenaer — Study of the art of war, combined with archæological pursuits — Our neighbours, the breeches-maker and fruiterer—The English accused of devouring their prisoners—Notions of equality—My dog introduces me to Dugazon and the actors of the Comédie Française—Kind reception in the green-room—Departure for Calais —The buns of an actress poison to soul and body—Mesdemoiselles Contat and Lange—The Archbishop's niece —Privileges of the Opera—Defrêne—Lais—Balbatre—Chenier—Charles IX.—Talma—Schisms in the theatre—Garnier, the painter—A studio in the Louvre—Berthon—A political model—*Scènes d'Atelier*, or mystification of a *studio* — David and Napoleon — Their vanity — David's death-bed—Displeasure of Napoleon—Classical taste and its absurdities.

FORTUNATELY for me, if I breathed such a corrupted atmosphere, a powerful antiseptic agency counteracted the contagion. In addition

to the demagogues, both French and foreign, who frequented our house, it was the evening rendezvous of many delightful *savans* and literary men, who continued to cultivate sciences and arts as calmly as if they lived in the most halcyon days of peace. Amongst these were the Abbé Barthélemi de Courci, keeper of the antiquities in the Bibliothèque du Roi, and brother to the celebrated author of Anacharsis; Barbier du Bocage, the well-known geographer; Vivant Denon, who afterwards went to Egypt with Napoleon. Of all these visitors, the one that interested me the most was Denon: his manners were most polite, and he was a delighful *raconteur*. Possessed of great versatility, his career in life had been marked by many curious events. At an early age he had written a comedy called, "*Julie, ou le bon Père.*" This piece had been rejected by the *Comité de Lecture* of the French theatre, but several of the actresses, who were delighted with the author, overruled the opinions of their *camarades*, and brought it out. The result, however, confirmed the opinion of

the actors; it was one of those milk-and-water productions, which the French call *à l'eau de rose.* Denon now devoted himself to engraving, and, under the patronage of Madame de Pompadour, was made an engraver of the Court, and had his *entrées* at Versailles, having been appointed a *Gentilhomme de la Chambre.* He used to relate an anecdote of his calling upon Voltaire when passing through Ferney. The cynic philosopher refused to see him, when his visitor sent back the servant to tell his master that Vivant Denon being a *Gentilhomme de la Chambre du Roi,* had his *entrées* everywhere. Voltaire, struck with the impertinence of the message, sent him word, that since he claimed his *entrées* in the "regions of the shades," he might come in. They breakfasted together. Voltaire was much pleased with his guest, and requested him to draw his portrait. Denon complied, but his production did not please his host, who affirmed that he had made him much too old, and certainly very ugly—an offence which he never forgave.

Denon's engravings, more especially his etchings, were very clever, and he imitated Rembrandt so admirably that, in several instances, the most experienced collectors of prints could not distinguish the originals from the copies. His "Adoration of the Shepherds," after Giordano, was considered so able a production, that he was admitted an Associate of the Academy. Few men could boast or boasted more of his *bonnes fortunes*, and his vanity was, at times, very ridiculous. When appointed Director of the Museums by Napoleon, he had a medal struck with his effigy, and on the reverse, surrounded with a wreath of oak leaves and of laurel, was inscribed—*Et moi aussi j'ai vécu dans le grand siècle.* As a man of taste, he was sadly deficient, and his contempt of Canova was a striking illustration of his want of judgment in the fine arts. A singular anecdote is related regarding the statue of Napoleon by that great sculptor. The statue was a naked figure. The Emperor, on seeing it, asked Denon what he thought of it. He hesitated in

giving an answer; but Napoleon insisting upon knowing his opinion, he confessed he did not like it as a work of art, and that he also objected to it on the score of its casting a reflection on the Emperor, as he had given to his statue the torso of a Hercules, contrasting with his slight figure, to his disadvantage. Strange to say, the vanity of the great man felt hurt, and he immediately ordered the statue to be re-covered with its green serge, and removed from his presence. It was afterwards purchased at a low price, and found its way to Prussia.

Denon used to mention a curious occurrence of his younger days. He laboured under the stone, and, fearful of the operation, he asked his surgeon how long it would last. He replied, ten minutes or a quarter of an hour. By the watch, this time did not appear very long, but one day passing before Notre Dame and looking up at the clock, he went up to the gallery, and seating himself on the parapet, watched the progress of the enormous minute-hand on the dial-plate, it appeared to him a

month—a year—of anguish, and he refused to submit to the operation until his sufferings rendered it indispensable.

Denon's reputation of being an antiquarian and a *savant* was usurped by charlatanism. He had a mere smattering of archæologic science, and his museum, which resembled those curiosity-shops, which the French call *de bric-a-brac*, was a proof of his want of taste and judgment. It was a heap of valuable and worthless articles, huddled together without any discrimination or order. But Denon possessed most ingratiating manners, was, at the same time, shrewd and keen, and had been successfully employed during the former *régime* in various diplomatic missions.

Millin, keeper of the cabinet of medals, was also a man whose attainments had been much overrated. He used to write both on antiquities and on natural history, and when his works on archæology were disparaged, his friends would say, *Que voulez-vous? Millin est un naturaliste:* and on the other hand, when his books on Natural History were spoken

of with contempt, they would observe, *Que voulez-vous ? Millin est un antiquaire !*

Walkenaer, who afterwards attained great celebrity in literature, was also a constant visitor. I may therefore say that, from my childhood, I was surrounded by men of talent and notoriety. As I have already stated, this connexion gave me an early taste for works of art, and my pocket-money was applied to the purchase of prints, chiefly etchings, and shells, while I pursued the study of entomology with Walkenaer, when, with the Faunus of Paris in hand, we wandered about fields and gardens in search of insects, of which I had formed a tolerable collection, chiefly of the *Coleoptera*.

The versatility of tastes in the same person is often remarkable. Although my brother was mostly occupied in archæologic pursuits, yet the science of war seemed his favourite vocation. He pored over the works of Vauban, Belisle, when he laid down Folard's Polybius, and round his room were suspended plans of the campaigns of Marlborough and Condé. At other times, he

moulded fortifications in clay, and collected models of artillery, pontoons, &c. I have already mentioned that he had always wished to be an engineer, but his bad health had induced my father to oppose this desire. During the agitation that then prevailed, I think that he would have joined the emigrants, if circumstances, and prudence, had not prevented him from taking so rash a step.

Thus passed my early life, which I may say had been cradled in confusion and turmoil. About this time we removed from the Rue de la Michaudière to the Rue Neuve St. Roch, where we occupied the first floor of a house opposite the lateral entrance of the church. My father seemed determined to approach as near as possible to the focus of strife. To the right and left of the porte-cochère, resided a fruiterer and his wife, and a German leather breeches-maker—both of them fierce Jacobins. The fruiterer's name was De Lâtre; the *culottier's* Hoffmann. I soon became a prime favourite with the fruiterer; he was corporal in the National Guard of the section *de la butte des*

moulins—and vowed destruction to royalty, aristocracy, and every man of fortune, whom he considered as an *accapareur*, or monopolist—a hateful term in times of dearth, when starvation is attributed to the wealthy. I well recollect, at a time when the most absurd reports were circulated about England and the British Government, and war had broken out, Citizeness De Lâtre, the *fruitière*, bringing some peaches to my mother, observed in her *armoire* a large stock of linen, when she exclaimed, that she saw no reason why an *aristocrate* should have more clothes than any other citizen, more especially *une Anglaise*, since the English, under Pitt, had acted so infamously towards the Republican *défenseurs de la patrie*, having sent to India for savages to devour their prisoners! and that those who were allowed to live, for the purpose of being exchanged, were fed with *bouillon*, made of their murdered comrades. Indeed, the stories related of the English, the emigrants, and the satellites of Pitt and Cobourg, although more absurd than any fairy tale, were generally credited by the people. I am confident that my family would

have been sacrificed by their infuriated neighbours, but for me, whom they looked upon as a most promising youth, sadly regretting that I was not *un Français.* One of my mischievous tricks procured me the admiration of all the neighbourhood. In the centre of one of the side windows of St. Roch was a stained pane of glass, bearing a double L, the initials of Louis, and a crown. Somehow or other, this emblem of royalty had escaped the searching eyes of the plebeians of our *quartier*, when I took up a stone, and smashed the offensive cypher of monarchy. I verily think, that if they could have afforded it, they would have had my bust moulded, and placed it in the Temple of Reason.

It was through the instrumentality of the worthy fruiterer, who had made me purchase a carbine, and often took me with him to parade, that my taste for dramatic pursuits was first developed. I had always delighted in theatricals; and the first piece my father took me to see in Paris was Racine's "*Athalie,*" which was per-

formed, with the choruses of Gossec, at the Théâtre Rue Favart; and I much regretted that my visits to the play-house were of rare occurrence. Howbeit, it was otherwise ordained.

I had a little spaniel, called Chloe, a dog of the Blenheim breed, very fond of me; but most noisy and destructive. My father, therefore, insisted on my parting with my pet. Great was my grief; when my friend De Lâtre came to comfort me, by informing me that there was a good citizen, and a most worthy man, who had always expressed a desire to possess such an animal; for, although he abhorred the English Government, yet he esteemed British patriots, and was partial to British dogs. This worthy *citoyen* was no other than Dugazon, the celebrated actor of the Comédie Française. My kind neighbour informed me that with citizen Dugazon my Chloe would be as happy as a princess. This promise reconciled me to my loss, and, with bitter tears in my eyes, I took up my pretty companion under my arm, and,

with Citizen De Lâtre, proceeded to the house of Citizen Dugazon, who then resided on the Quai Voltaire.

The comedian received me with open arms, gave me a fraternal kiss, caressed my Chloe, and, bidding me dry up my tears, told me that I might come and see her as often as I liked, and that, if I wished to go to the theatre, he would give me orders whenever I wished. The following day, I dined with him and his delightful sister, Madame Vestris, and Mademoiselle Candeille, and afterwards proceeded to the theatre. In the *foyer*, or green-room, he introduced me to the two Baptistes, to Monvel, St. Phal, Mademoiselle Contat and her sister, Mademoiselle Lange, who had not then seceded from the theatre; and *le petit Anglais*, as they called me, was ever after the *bien venu* of the circle, which I enjoyed the more from my dear mother having often told me that players were the most abominable set of people in the creation. This dislike to the profession was strongly illustrated by an occurrence that took place at Calais.

After the events of the 10th of August, my mother was so terrified and shocked at what passed under our very window, that she insisted on returning to England with my brother and me. In fact, a more heroic woman would have been struck with terror. A drunken ruffian, who carried the head of an unfortunate Swiss soldier on a pike, brought it to our window, and then dashed it on the street against a post. My poor mother, more dead than alive, shrieked at the sight of the ghastly visage, and ordered our man, Coté, to cover it with straw. This order Coté, with much reluctance, obeyed; but the neighbours were furious, uncovered the head, and were about breaking our windows, when the fruiterer and the breeches-maker interfered, and assured them that we were *des Citoyens Bataves et des bons enfans!* My poor mother was of a different opinion; and, after a consultation with our good friends, the Van de Nivers, it was decided that we were to set off for Calais, and there await events for our future guidance.

At Calais, my brother got acquainted with a

young man belonging to the Treasury, who was about emigrating, and they frequented the theatre every play night. I remember that, at a corner of the Rue de la Comédie, there was a segment of a bomb inserted in the wall, with an inscription, that this shell had been thrown into the town, when bombarded by *les infames Anglais*. Howbeit, at the play-house they got acquainted with several actresses; and, as I sometimes accompanied the party—much against my mother's wishes, and by dint of tears and uproarious opposition—I met a young *comédienne*, who gave me a bag of cakes and sugar-plums, although she appeared to me much sweeter than her *macarons* and her *bonbons*. The remains of the present I took home. When my mother asked me who had given me those dainties, without hesitation, I told her the truth, that I had received them from a pretty little actress, when the dear Anabaptist snatched them from me, and, to my utter amazement, threw them out of the window, telling me that they were poison both to my body and soul. This

denunciation I by no means could comprehend, and I became outrageous for the loss of my *goodies*, which, no doubt, were picked up by some French infidel, who, in all probability, devoured them without apprehension of death or eternal perdition.

I had related this anecdote to my new friend, Dugazon, who made me repeat it in the green-room, to the no small amusement of the ladies of the party. Here it was that I became acquainted with Picard, the actor and dramatist, and Pigault Lebrun, who spoke English remarkably well.

A singular incident occurred about this time, when difference of political opinion brought on a schism in the theatre. One evening, Mlles. Contats and Lange took me home with them, and, after many caresses, begged of me to break off with Dugazon and his *clique*; adding, "*si tu fréquentes ces gens-là, mon petit ami, tu es perdu.*"

However, these friendly admonitions were of no avail; they appeared, with many of their

camarades, to regret most deeply the *ancien régime*, in which they were treated as servants of the Crown, and liable to be imprisoned in Fort l'Evèque if they offended any person about the court, or even the public— they seemed to glory in their abject slavery, proud of wearing golden chains. This fraction of the stage was essentially royalist, and satisfied with a lot that even deprived their remains of Christian sepulture,— while the singers and dancers of the *Académie Royale de Musique* claimed an exception from that *ban*, ever since Louis XIV, *Le Grand Monarque*, took it into his head to figure in the *corps de ballet*. Strange anomaly!—any meretricious *figurante* of the opera had claims on the Church which were refused to the most distinguished followers of the drama—nay, the precincts of the opera were a sanctuary, in which, even the Church could not interfere. A curious anecdote was related on this subject—a niece (qy daughter?) of one of the Archbishops of Paris was much attached to a young chorister of Notre Dame;—their love being discovered, the young man was expelled the Church, and joined the

Académie de Musique; the young lady, persisting in her resolution to marry him, was about being immured in a nunnery, when her lover, on representing to the manager of the theatre and the *gentilhomme de la chambre*, that she possessed a beautiful contralto voice, and was moreover a beautiful girl, procured her an engagement, which she duly signed. He then carried her off in a hackney coach to the theatre. It was on an evening when the opera of "*Orpheus*" was performed. The poor girl, who had never entered a playhouse, and who had been told that it was a hell upon earth, was sadly terrified, when, on going up stairs to the manager's room, she encountered various black, blue and red devils, and hobgoblins, horned and tailed, with torches in their hands, and heard the loud peals of the mimic thunder. She fell upon her knees and recited her orisons, thinking herself in the infernal regions; nor was it without great difficulty that she was convinced of the real state of affairs; but love prevailed over religious terror, and she became one of the Academy. The worthy Prelate

applied in vain for his truant niece—the rules and regulations of the establishment could not be broken—she was *une pensionnaire du Roi.*

So bigoted were the prejudices against the stage, that, at a period of great public distress, when the Parisian Theatres gave charitable performances, and actually realised above 36,000 francs (about £1,500), the *curés* of the different parishes, by order of the diocesan, refused to accept the donation, unless it was handed to them by the *Lieutenant de Police.* On this occasion, the *Comédie Française* made 10,500 and the Opera 11,600 francs.

On the other side of the question, Talma, Monvel, Dugazon, and many of their *camarades*, who wished to claim for their profession the rights of citizens and of men, were looked upon as Jacobins; it may, therefore, be readily conceived, that, in spite of the friendly advice of my fair friends, I remained true to my old acquaintance. In addition to this circumstance, which launched me on the troubled

waters of the drama, my pursuit of prints, especially of Callot's delightful etchings, had procured me the acquaintance of Defrêne, the singer of the opera, who possessed a most valuable collection. Although he was a *modéré*, through him I became acquainted with Laïs, the celebrated singer, who was a most furious Jacobin; so much so, that, after the events of the 9th Thermidor, when the power of *terrorisme* was overthrown, he was hissed and hooted off the stage in the opera of *Les Prétendus*;—on this occasion he wore a red coat, when a man in one of the front boxes exclaimed, *Laïs, as-tu teint ton habit avec le sang de tes victimes?* This apostrophe was followed with tumultuous shouts of execration, and he was obliged to quit the stage.

I recollect an amusing occurrence after his retirement—a *doublure*, or substitute, appeared for him in "*Anacréon.*" The pit, not satisfied with his voice, expressed their disapprobation, when, no ways intimidated, he stepped to the footlights and very quietly said:

"*Citoyens et citoyennes, si j'avais une voix de* 20,000 *francs par an, est-ce que vous croyez que je serais assez bête pour vous la donner pour mille écus ?*"

This *naïveté* was received with immense applause, and he proceeded in his part without any further interruption.

A fatality seemed to be attached to me in my theatrical attractions. My music-master was then Balbastre, organist of St. Roch and harpsichord-master to the unfortunate Queen. He was the inventor of a *Piano organisé*, which combined both the piano and the organ at will. The harpsichord on which I played at his house was an instrument given to him by Marie Antoinette, and painted by Watteau, on a gilt ground.

Balbastre's son was a violin-player at the opera, and he frequently took me there, to encourage, as my father thought, my taste for music. At this time he was on terms of intimacy with the beautiful Clotilde, who subsequently personated the Goddess of Reason : this divinity took a great liking to the *petit anglais*, and I became an *habitué* of the *foyer*.

But I still preferred the society of Dugazon,

for at this period much excitement prevailed in the *Comédie Française*, occasioned by Chenier's celebrated tragedy of Charles IX., illustrating the massacre of St. Bartholomew.

Talma had appeared in this production with immense success, and had excited the jealousy of the hitherto famed Larive. The piece became immensely popular, but, as it denounced despotism and priestcraft, the king, on the application of the clergy, prohibited its performance, through M. Duras, then *Gentilhomme de la Chambre ;* while, on the other hand, the *Commune de Paris*, and the people, loudly demanded it. Mirabeau himself, in the name of the Federalists from the provinces, went to the theatre to request its being brought out, when he met with a plump refusal from the *Comédiens du Roi*, who, still considering themselves the servants of the sovereign, denied any other authority. Bailly, then Mayor of Paris, summoned the committee of the society to the town-house, when they were ordered to play the piece ; they then proceeded to expel Talma from their company, and my friend Dugazon immediately resigned.—The people, however, insisted on the tragedy and Talma—a regular theatrical row followed—the

pit benches were torn up, and a fragment of a seat was thrown on the stage, and was nigh killing Fleury, who had been one of the leaders of the opposition to the will of the people—who soon carried the day. Charles IX. was played, but Mme. Raucourt, Mlle. Contat and other performers sent in their resignation;—it was after this scene that Fleury challenged Dugazon, and, after a long contest, in which both (very probably wishing to avoid danger,) were slightly wounded in the sword arm.

It may easily be imagined that, while I was subject to such *distractions*, my classic studies got on but slowly, much to the annoyance of my dear good tutor, who was himself constantly occupied in his section, where he was one of the most energetic and eloquent speakers, in endeavouring to control factious disorders, and consolidate the constitutional power.

It was some years after, that my father, much annoyed at my slow progress, took it into his head that I had a taste for drawing, and, by the advice of Denon, I was sent to the Louvre, under Garnier, the painter, well known by his admirable pictures of Dædalus and Icarus, and the Grief

of the family of Priam on the walls of Troy. I remained two years in his studio, and, as I shall shortly relate, left it when beginning to draw from the cast.

Nothing could be more singular than the life of an *atelier*. As the youngest pupil, I was made what is called a *gringallet*, or a colour-grinder and fag, when I was also honoured with the appellation of *Rapin*.

For the preservation of my morals, I was not allowed to remain in the studio when a female model sat. One of ours was a lovely girl, named Victoire, and somehow or other I made her acquaintance in the corridor of the gallery, and on the dark winding stairs that led to it; and not unfrequently I accompanied her home to her little lodgings, near La Halle aux Blés, as Victoire wished to take lessons in English, and had a great desire to see England, where she was told that a good model was a very scarce article. Pretty Victoire was, moreover, a royalist, and would not sit for David, but chiefly *posed* for my master, who was also a staunch enemy of republicanism.

I now became acquainted with my friend Berthon, who was a pupil of David's, and

resided with Denon. He was then a youth, and the first time I saw him, he was painting a scull crowned with a chaplet of roses. Many years after, I met with him at Bordeaux, and he related to me a most entertaining anecdote of another *political model*, who was as much attached to Napoleon as Victoire had been to the Bourbons.

Berthon was portrait-painter to the Emperor, a situation that he owed both to his talents and to Denon's recommendation; and, when Napoleon abdicated, Berthon could not witness the Restoration without concern and regret for the fall of his patron, and withdrew in disgust to Tours. There he was employed on an historical painting that required a female model. He enquired of a brother artist if such a person could be procured, when he was informed that there was a woman in the place, who had been a *vivandière* in the Imperial army, and who had also sat as a model. However, since the Restoration, she had refused to follow this avocation, on political grounds.

Berthon, somewhat surprised that the state of politics should thus influence this singular personage, sent for her; when she confirmed all

that he heard on the subject, adding that, "since the fall of the Emperor, she could no longer assist *les beaux arts*." Our painter replied that no one could deplore the abdication of Napoleon more deeply than he did, since in him he had lost a generous and a kind protector. He further assured her, that he had left his dear Paris not to witness the degradation of his country, in being again subjected to the Bourbons.

Our model was delighted with this information. With eyes streaming with tears, she embraced Berthon, and assured him that she would sit for *him* with the greatest delight. The next day she gave him a *séance*, when, to his utter amazement, she displayed the cause of her objection to sit for any artist of the Restoration, which was simply, that some of the *braves* had tattooed on the lower part of her back a capital N., the initial of the Emperor, surmounted with a crown, and under it could be read in most legible characters the following device of military fidelity :—

"Toujours Fidele au 32eme de Ligne!'

A French studio presents a singular scene to the uninitiated. The students were up to every

kind of mischievous tricks; but they were chiefly practised on unfortunate amateurs and would-be judges of painting, who occasionally visited the master, who himself set an example to his pupils in mystifying troublesome intruders. These mystifications were called *scies d'atelier*, or *studio saws*, sawing, on these occasions, being synonymous in some degree with our expression of *boring*. Hence the common French saying, when a man is bored by serious conversation—"*Il me scie le dos avec un confessional;*"—(he saws my back with a confessional.) Oftentimes, when one of these troublesome *cognoscenti* came to visit Garnier, and teased him with absurd remarks, he would begin one of his *scies*, and I now recollect two of his favourite ones, which I could not well explain without a dialogue, to illustrate the relative position of amateur and painter:—

Amateur.—Now tell me, my dear sir, which of the Carracci do you prefer in regard to drawing, colouring, and keeping—Annibal, Luigi or Augustine?

Garnier (*continuing to paint.*)—Why, my dear sir, Annibal has done some fine things—*bien tappés*—very fine; so has Luigi, and I must say that Augustine sometimes *avait du*

chique.—(Then he would hum the beginning of his *scie.*)

Quant les poules vont aux champs,
La première va devant.

Amateur.—May I ask you what do you mean by the word *tappé?*

(Here a general titter amongst the students at the extreme ignorance of the stranger.)

Garnier.—*Tappé*, my dear sir, means *du chique.*

Amateur.—I am still in the dark, for I do not know what *chique* means.

Garnier.—*Ma foi, Monsieur—une croute n'est ni chiquée ni tapée.*

(Sings on).

La seconde suit la prèmière
La troisième vient derrière.

Amateur (*somewhat discomposed*).—Now, Mr. Garnier, which of the artists of the modern school do you think most approaches the divine Raphael.

Garnier.—Why, perhaps, myself.

(Sings on)—

Quant les poules vont aux champs
La première va devant.

From this specimen of the conversation, it may be easily imagined that the intruder did not prolong his stay, nor was he disposed to pay another visit to an atelier for information in painting; and, on his departure, amidst the general hilarity of the students, he might have heard remarks not altogether flattering to his taste as an amateur of painting; when often an atelier chant and chorus would follow, and, the more absurd the words, the more popular were they. The following is a specimen:—

1st *Voice*—Il y avait quatre jeunes gens du quartier.
2nd—Il y avait quatre jeunes gens du quartier.
3rd—Il y avait quatre jeunes gens du quartier.
4th—Ils étaient tous quatre malades.
5th—Ils étaient tous quatre malades.
Chorus—Ades, ades, ades.
1st *Voice*—On les conduit à l'hôpital.
2nd—On les conduit à l'hôpital.
Chorus—Al, Al, Al.

2.

3rd *Voice*—Ils demandent du bouillon.
4th—Ils demandent du bouillon.
5th—Mais il n'était ni chaud ni bon.
6th—Mais il n'était ni chaud ni bon.
Chorus—On, On, On.

3.

1st *Voice*—On les mit tous quatre *téte béche.**
2nd—On les mit tous quatre *téte béche.*
3rd—C'est l'usage de la maison.
4th—C'est l'usage de la maison.
Chorus—On, On, On.
1st *Voiec*—Cà commence à vous ennuyer.
2nd—Cà commence à vous ennuyer.
Chorus—Eh, Eh, Eh.
1st *Voice*—Eh bien, je vais recommencer,
Il y avait quatre jeunes gens du quartier, &c.

And then the rhapsody, or some other composition equally absurd, would recommence.

I had frequent occasion at this time to meet the celebrated David. He was in every respect a most forbidding person. His looks, naturally sinister, were rendered more hideous by a tumour in the cheek, the nature of which I could not understand. He was considered as the founder of a new and what was called a classic school; the *manierism* of Boucher, Vanloo, and Coypel, he abhorred. He had commenced his studies under Boucher, whom he left for the atelier of Vien. However, disgusted with the style of the day, he repaired to Italy, where he

* *Téte béche* means heads and tails.

said the sight of the *chef-d'œuvres* of that school and the conversation of antiquarians had cured him of the cataract. He then adopted a classic purity of style, and, despising colouring and what he used to call perspective and chromatic harmony, he applied himself chiefly to correct drawing, a method which gave to his productions the appearance of sculptured marble bassi-relievi, more than of living scenes; and many of his figures were borrowed from antique intaglios and cameos. He wished that each figure should be an academic study, that might be copied separately out of the grouping. Despising everything modern as barbarous and *manieré*, he was a slave of antiquity; and he often told Talma that he first admired him in his Britannicus, when he fancied that he beheld a Roman statue descend from its pedestal and walk before him. A staunch Republican, he threw himself headlong into the revolutionary vortex, and was, perhaps, one of the most ferocious and unrelenting members of the Jacobin Club. When numerous and indiscriminate executions took place, he would chuckle with delight, and exclaim, "*C'est ça, il faut encore broyer du rouge.*" His vanity could only be equalled by his cruelty,

and one day, when he was boasting of being incorruptible, like Robespierre, Fabre d'Églantine replied, "I know what would bribe you!"—"What?" he exclaimed with indignation. "An apotheosis in the Pantheon during your lifetime," was the answer. This vanity was exhibited on his death-bed, when, to ascertain the state of his faculties, an engraving of his picture of Thermopylæ was shewn to him: he cast on it his glassy eyes, and muttered, "*Il n'y a que moi qui pouvait concevoir la tête de Leonidas.*" These were his last words.

Yet this miscreant, bold in his career of crime, was both a sycophant and a coward. When painting by order of Napoleon, he often crouched like a spaniel before his insolent protector, who frequently put his patience to a severe test. In his celebrated picture of the distribution of the eagles to his legions, David had represented Victory soaring over them, and holding forth crowns of laurel. "What do you mean, Sir, by this foolish allegory?" said the Emperor; "it was unnecessary. Without borrowing such absurd fictions, the world must know that all my soldiers are conquerors." So saying, he quitted the studio; but, on returning

a few days after, he found that the artist had painted three scrolls on the ground, bearing the names of Buonaparte, Hannibal, and Charlemagne. Napoleon was delighted with the compliment. David used to relate another anecdote of his employer. When he had ordered him to paint his portrait, he asked him how he intended to represent him. "On the field of victory, Sire, sword in hand." "Bah!" replied the Emperor. "Victories are not gained by the sword alone. Sir, represent me dashing forward on a fiery steed." When requesting Napoleon to sit a little more steadily, that he might the more easily catch the resemblance, he replied: "Pshaw, Sir! who cares for a resemblance? What are mere features, Sir? The artist should represent the character of the physiognomy—all its fire—all its inspiration. Do you think, Sir, that Alexander ever sat to Appelles?"

His talents alone saved him after the fall of Robespierre and his party. When accused of his crimes by Pétion, he quailed with terror, and sought to excuse himself by the most silly and contemptible subterfuges. He declared that, at the time alluded to, he was ill—very ill;

that he had never courted Robespierre; that, on the contrary, Robespierre had courted him; he solemnly declared that he had never embraced him, but had been embraced by him. This disgusting defence met with general contempt.

He was, I believe, the only French artist who exhibited his works for money. This was the case with the "Sabines," which he exposed at one franc admission. This circumstance gave rise to a vaudeville, in which one of the songs winds up with the severe compliment—

> David, pour l'honneur de la France,
> Ne quitte jamais tes pinceaux.

Several of David's pupils, in imitation of their master's love of antiquity, had formed themselves into a society, called, *Les Penseurs*. They wore a Phrygian costume, and used to assemble, and remain for a long time in silent cogitation, until one of them spoke, and delivered his opinion on Grecian perfection.

Talma would often consult David on costume, and attended not only to the dress of the character, but to all the properties, such as swords shields, &c., which were always most correct. It is rather strange, but this attention of David to

theatrical dresses was the occasion of Napoleon taking a dislike to Talma, who had once been one of his greatest favourites. In David's monster picture of the Coronation, the most minute attention was paid to the costume of the two hundred figures that were brought into it; when the Emperor harshly exclaimed: "Sir, this is a melo-dramatic scene, instead of a solemn consecration. I suppose you were directed by that histrion, Talma." A few days after, a decree was issued, that prohibited the admission of any actor into the 4th class of the Institute.

During this classical delirium, every thing assumed what they considered an antique type. Tinkers and tailors, nightmen and rag-pickers, would call themselves by Grecian and Roman names—Cato, and Brutus, and Mutius Scævola, without the most distant notion of the character of the great men who bore these distinguished names. Many of these assumptions were most ludicrous; and, in a play that came out after the 9th Thermidor, a patriot recommended his porter to call himself Cæsar, "*ce fameux Républicain*," to which the fellow replies, "*Cæsar! tiens! c'est le nom de notre chien!*"

At the same time, this introduction of ancient works of art tended to alter and improve the taste of the day. For instance, the Tuileries had been ornamented with statues of Costou and Coisevox, of the Boucher and Vanloo *genre*. Several antique statues were now brought from the royal palaces in the country, and magnificent bronze casts, by the celebrated founders the Kellers, of the group of Laocoon, the Gladiator, the Belvidere Apollo, and many other chef-d'œuvres of antiquity were placed in the gardens, exhibiting a strong contrast between prettiness and the sublime and beautiful.

Still, ridiculous anomalies were frequently observable; for instance, when public functionaries wore the Spanish trunk and hose, and turned-up hats and plumes, a Grecian sword would be slung by their side. An affectation of the antique was also common under the reign of Napoleon, and this is illustrated in the pedestal of the Column in the Place Vendome, in which military costumes are represented standing erect like armour: uniform coats, hussar dolmans and pelisses, &c., sculptured as if they were made of solid materials instead

of yielding cloth. If they exist at some future and distant period, it will be maintained by the antiquarians of the day, that those appointments were of some protective metal, like a cuirass. During those fearful saturnalia, it might be truly said that the French were stalking about on stilts.

CHAPTER V.

Reflections on the state of France—Tenth of August—Marat—Danton—Théroigne de Mericour, or *la Belle Liègeoise*—Her ferocity—Conduct of the Clergy — Servois' daring proceedings during the massacre in the prisons—Frightful condition of Paris—Cruelty of the murderers in the Massacre of September—Conduct of the authorities—Natural ferocity of the French—Collot d'Herbois—Persecution of the French Actors and Actresses—Their narrow escape from the scaffold — La Bussière — His stratagem to save them—Dugazon—Mademoiselle Devienne—State of the Drama.

HAVING thus sketched the pursuits and occupations of my younger years, which materially influenced the views that I entertained of passing events, and, at the same time, laid the foundation of the principles that actuated me in after life, I return to the consideration of the most

striking occurrences that I witnessed in this fearful period of national transition.

My father's opinion regarding France and the crisis that convulsed it had greatly changed when the Constituent Assembly had terminated its sittings. Much has been said of the labours of its members. They have been extolled to the skies by historians, and considered the saviours of the country, as having framed a wise constitution, and established what many citizens fancied a constitutional monarchy. No doubt this assembly, composed of many wise and worthy men, meant well; no doubt they endeavoured to remodel the laws and destroy despotism; belonging themselves, in a great measure, to the *Tiers-état*, they had restored to the nation their natural rights, and subjected all classes, without any regard to privilege, to an equality in the administration of the law, and in their claims to preferment in the State. However wise these measures might have been, they were far from deserving the poetic eulogies conferred upon them by a late writer, who asserts, "If ever inspiration was visible in the prophet or ancient legislator, it may be

asserted that the Constituent Assembly had two years of sustained inspiration. France was the inspired of civilization."*

With all due respect to the opinion of this historian, who, to use the words of Châteaubriand, "*gilded the guillotine*," it did not require much foresight to conclude, that they had prepared the road to anarchy and republicanism. They had certainly propped the throne with a constitutional support, but the crown had been shorn of its splendour, neutralized in its power, and every attribute of monarchy had been trampled under foot. The aristocracy had been abolished, and the sovereign placed under the protection of the people, while terror of approaching events, that cast their shadows before them, induced the aristocracy and nobility to fly the country and abandon their king; at the same time, the sale of church property roused the greater part of the clergy to oppose any reform that interfered with their wealth or power.

Lamartine himself admits that, on the breaking up of the Constituent Assembly, the King

* Lamartine.

was irresponsible, and consequently passive, the respectful picture of suppressed royalty. I cannot comprehend how a suppressed royalty can be the type of a constitutional monarchy, which it was the boast of the Constituent Assembly to have established on what they considered a firm and legal basis. At the same time, it must be admitted that, had this body been composed of Solons and Lycurguses, they could not have stopped the natural current of the public opinion, or have controlled the torrent of troubled water that was rolling in an impetuous course to an ocean of anarchical turmoil. What was most strange in this assembly was the singular fact, that a universal suffrage should have returned so many wise and virtuous representatives of the nation—a nation in a state of general effervescence, when the scum rose to the surface. For, in fact, when the King convoked the States, he threw himself on a universal suffrage that consisted of above five millions of electors. It is, no doubt, true that the masses did not actually vote; but, as every tax-payer of more than twenty-five years of age, including poll taxes, had the power of nominating the electors, the greater proportion of the population might

have been looked upon as voters. The King's government, in fact, had evoked a giant—a monstrous giant—from the earth. They quailed before the menacing Colossus of their own creation. Yet they treated him with as much contempt as the Lilliputians treated Gulliver. They fancied that, when he reposed and slumbered, they could bind down his mighty arms with gossamer ligatures; that their puny swords, mere pins and needles, could inflict tiny punctures that would disable him, and prevent him from wielding his herculean club. On every occasion they irritated the people, forgetting that they themselves had invited them to share the sovereignty of the land, until they became sole arbiters of its destinies. Insult was added to injury. The ignorant masses became instruments of ambition and of discontent. They had learned their physical power, and were determined to exert it, wherever and whenever they were told to strike the blow by their selfish demagogic leaders and oracles.

Howbeit, I am not writing the history of the times, but have merely ventured on this digression to show that my father's apprehension of approaching anarchy and destruction was well founded.

In regard to his personal position, having become, as I have already stated, an involuntary holder of French funds, the issue of the assignats, which any one could foresee would soon be depreciated, threatened both public and private ruin, and I feel confident that, had he possessed means of so doing, he would have returned to England with his family.

My own notions, I must confess, experienced a material change after the 10th of August. My father had taken me to the Tuileries after the conflict, and, accustomed though I had been to scenes of bloodshed, the ferocity of the rabble made me shudder. The atrocious and wanton cruelties practised upon the poor Swiss, who had merely done their duty as faithful mercenaries, were revolting. Their heads were carried about on pikes, and women and children, wallowing in their blood, sported their ears and noses pinned to their caps or their bosoms, like cannibal cockades; while their limbs were dragged about with ropes, and mangled with savage ingenuity.

The Palace presented a fearful sight. The vestibule and stairs were covered with clotted

pools of blood, on which myriads of flies were disporting themselves. The smell of blood was appalling. All the doors had been broken open, and their gilded panels shivered to pieces. The beds and their hangings were torn down, and well do I recollect a ruffian, with a bloody pike in one hand, holding a little boy by the other, and exclaiming, when the urchin was admiring the splendour of the bed of state, "*Vas, mon petit ! nous dormons mieux sur notre paille !*" What a philosophic observation in such a terrific scene !

All the rich suits of clothes and court dresses were pulled to tatters, and every one sought to decorate his or her person with some fragment of the devastation; while ruffians, who had broken into the royal chapel, dressed themselves in stoles and rich canonicals, and, reeling with wine, were perambulating the gardens, chanting some mimic passage of the church service. Not satisfied with the butchery of the day, and the havoc of their enemies, the rabble were bent upon mutual destruction. They fought and killed each other for liquor or the possession of some spoil; while, on the plea of honesty, they shot and piked to death any

one who was found making off with plate, jewels, or any valuable article of plunder, and when there were no more Swiss to slaughter, they scattered themselves about the adjacent streets, and wherever they saw the words '*Parlez au Suisse*' over the porter's lodges of private houses, they dragged out the poor wretches and massacred them, forgetting that *Suisse* was synonymous with *portier*, and that their victims had no more to do with Switzerland than with Cochin China.

The evening of this ominous day was lovely. The Tuileries was crowded with anxious visitors, quietly beholding the people collecting the bodies of the slain, which amounted to above a thousand, and piling them in heaps. During the night, the remains of friends and foes were consumed together.

In the midst of this confusion, the leaders of the people were pretending to restrain the excesses to which they had urged their satellites. Several of them were making idle harangues to check their excesses, and Danton, and Marat, who had been concealed during the attack, now made their appearance, flourishing a sabre, and with pistols in their belts—these monsters only

joining the people when the conflict was over, and when a Prussian officer, of the name of Westermann, whom they had placed in command of the *fédérés* and the rabble of the Faubourgs, had gone to inform them of the issue of the battle. He found Danton weeping, with his wife and children; Marat concealed in a cellar; but, the contest ended, this miscreant crowned himself with a wreath of laurels, as the conqueror of the day!

Santerre, a Polish officer of artillery, who commanded the artillery of the Faubourgs, and many others, were to be seen in various directions; but their efforts were vain in checking the torrent of popular fury. Yet, strange to say, crowds of curious persons, amongst whom we figured, went about unmolested. However, the number of drunken ruffians who issued forth from the cellars of the Palace, soon rendered the garden and the precincts of the Tuileries a perilous promenade; and amateurs very wisely took their departure. Santerre had surrounded the palace with the National Guards; but still the mob who had carried the day, were keeping up a straggling fire of musquetry against each other, till night set in, and they were too drunk or fatigued to do any more mischief.

During the outrages of this eventful day, a woman had been most conspicuous in exciting the fury of the populace, and their revengeful spirit. This was Théroigne de Méricour. The wretched creature had been a prostitute of Luxembourg, whose beauty had obtained for her the name of *la belle Liègeoise*. While yet a young girl, she had been inspired with revolutionary fanaticism, and had mainly contributed, both by her persuasive language and her fascinations, to the defection of the troops in garrison. Thrown into a fortress by the Emperor of Austria, she was, unfortunately, liberated, and immediately repaired to Paris, which presented a wider field for her revolutionary exploits. There she was, in turn, the mistress of a brother of Abbé Sièyes —some said of Sièyes himself; of an adventurer called Riomme, who pretended to be a French quaker; and of a Count Strogonoff, a Russian. During the popular effervescence, she was to be seen in all the public places, dressed in a blue riding-habit, a cap of liberty on her head, and brandishing a sabre, with a brace of pistols stuck in her girdle. She was usually followed by a band of infuriated women, and rendered herself

conspicuous during the massacres in the prisons. At the Conciergerie, when a poor girl of great beauty was brought out, who was named *la belle bouquetière*, our harpy dragged her forward, and, telling her that the world should decide between her charms and those of *la belle Liègeoise*, she had her stripped naked, and her out-stretched limbs nailed to a door; she then ordered a slow fire to be kindled under the unfortunate creature, got her demoniac companions to nip off her breasts, and, as she expired in horrid agonies, they danced, and sang the *Carmagnole* and *Ca ira* with frantic gesticulations. At the Abbaye, she decapitated one of her former lovers. This miserable maniac died a lunatic in the Asylum of La Salpetrière, in 1817. In her furious paroxysms, she ever laboured under her former delusions, and would incessantly cry out, "He is an aristocrat—a *modéré*—off with his head—*à la lanterne!*"

Never shall I forget the terror and agony of my poor mother during that fearful conflict. She mechanically went now and then to the window, scarcely knowing what she was about. It was then, as I have already related, that a miscreant raised his pike, bearing the bloody

head of a Swiss soldier, to our window, and then dashed it to the ground against a post.

Abbé Servois was with us during the greater part of this sanguinary day; and I well recollect his mentioning several priests who were the instigators of the attack; among others, the Vicar-General of Blois. I have often reflected with surprise on the conduct of the clergy on these disastrous occasions. Many of them not only excited the people to deeds of atrocious cruelty, but proudly boasted of having hitherto deceived them, and preached what they knew to be false, going so far as to deny the very existence of a God; thus proclaiming themselves base and despicable impostors. Such a recantation of principles—such an abnegation of every feeling of honour, or of self-respect, can only be attributed to the delirium of a fevered brain—a maniacal state of enthusiasm! How can we otherwise account for proceedings so opposed to the usual principles of action of egotism? One can easily imagine that the oscillation of events—a change in the condition of a nation—expediency—may induce an ambitious man to alter the course of his pursuits—that a demagogue may become the advocate

of a monarchic or an oligarchic form of government. Circumstances, experience, reflection, interest, may occasion such apparent tergiversation; but, in general, when a man seeks for power, popular influence, and importance in the community, he endeavours to obtain the good opinion and confidence of those whose support and assistance he solicits. Here we see men courting power, by asserting that they had been the most despicable and contemptible hypocrites. It may truly be said, that in times of revolutionary effervescence, the actions of public characters, as well as private individuals, drawn into the vortex of confusion, are often unaccountable, and verging on insanity.

My friend Servois, as well as his brother clergymen Grégoire and Royer, were well-meaning men, virtuous in every sense of the word; but they felt the absolute necessity of a universal reform in Church and State, as both were crumbling to the ground in tottering decrepitude, from a long-undermining corruption. They had taken the civic oath imposed on the clergy—both from motives of prudence and of wisdom. This obligation was, to be faithful to the nation, the laws and the king. In short, they were

pledging themselves to nothing more than the government had a right to expect from any citizen, more especially, if his social position gave him a great influence over the people. It is true, that to a certain extent, they denied the temporal, and perhaps on some occasions the spiritual authority and infallibility of the Pope; but in many former instances the French clergy had disputed the Transmontain domination. Another most praiseworthy motive had led the *assermenté* priests to make these concessions, and that was the conscientious feeling, that it was far better to submit to a decision that might be called compulsory, (since it not only deprived the dependent clergy of their livings, but exposed them to persecution and death had they resisted,) than to abandon their flocks without any spiritual guide or comforter in the midst of a general confusion that threatened alike to overthrow every notion, not only of religion but of morality. The refractory clergy were far more condemnable—for even if they could not conscientiously consent to take the oath forced upon them, they certainly were not obliged to kindle civil wars that involved the most fertile provinces in strife and bloodshed; a conduct that may be more

fairly attributed to revenge and cupidity, than to any attachment to their sovereign or to their faith; —most certainly it could not be for the interest of religion, that the non-jurors were to leave the country without any private or any public worship; since they excommunicated all the ecclesiastics who had taken the obnoxious oath, and declared all the sacraments administered by them, not only null and void, but destructive to soul and body; in short, they were determined to sacrifice the whole country from mere motives of personal interest and lucre.*

The conduct of the sworn clergy was diametrically opposed to that of the non-jurors: most of them were curates, on whom had fallen the arduous duties of the church, while the wealthy and proud incumbents were indulging in luxurious pleasure, and a pomp totally inconsistent with the pure and humble dictates of Christianity. While these prelates and their followers were kindling civil war, their excommunicated brethren were exerting their

* At this period, the property of the church comprised one fifth of the land, and was estimated at four thousand millions of francs—about one hundred and sixty millions sterling; yet many country curates received only £12 or £14 a year!!

best endeavours to maintain tranquillity, and exhorting the people to preserve order, and oppose the efforts of the evil-minded to disturb the public peace. It is true, that several members of the clergy had thrown up their ecclesiastical functions, and, to use a vulgar saying:—"*jetté leur froc aux orties.*"—Having lost all chance of preferment in the Church, they looked upon a political career as more likely to forward their views. But, in general, the *assermenté* clergy displayed great heroism, and the most manly virtues. Of this, we had a proof in our own family. During the massacres of September, Abbé Servois heard from our servant that the murderers had proceeded to the Abbaye, where numerous priests had been imprisoned; amongst them were two or three aged friends of his. Regardless of the danger he was about to incur, and despite our remonstrances, he flew to the prison. The mock tribunal that was sitting on these victims, were amazed at the daring of a deformed and diminutive being,—heard his prayer in favour of his sexagenarian friends with feelings of admiration, and allowed him to depart with the poor creatures he had thus courageously

saved. Yet in this noble act, a sore trial was reserved for him; as he passed the hatch of the prison, a ruffian, reeking in gore, mixed a cup of blood and wine—and compelled him to quaff the horrible beverage as a proof of his *civisme*. He came to our house with two of these unfortunates; one of them was about 80 years of age — my worthy friend was faint and weary—smeared with blood;—and it was an awful yet a glorious sight, to behold these poor creatures, thus heroically rescued from slaughter, embrace their saviour and throw themselves at his feet. The dwarf assumed the altitude of a giant!

While the people were throwing up defensive works on the heights of Montmartre, Montrouge, and the other hills commanding the capital, numbers of priests were actively employed in the national labour, exhorting and encouraging the untaught engineers by their example and their enthusiasm; while their enemies, with a crucifix in one hand, and a dagger in the other, were exciting the population of the provinces to a murderous and implacable war.

Amongst the ecclesiastics who visited us, the most remarkable person was Bishop Grégoire.

He was an enthusiastic Republican, and he had founded these principles upon the Gospel. He considered that Christianity was a code of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. That it would, in time, crush all despotic power, and overthrow all the thrones in the world. When it was observed to him, that the Saviour had said, "give unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's;" he replied, that most undoubtedly every one was obliged to contribute his proportion of taxation to the support of the country; but that paying imposts, even when unjustly levied, did not preclude men from the right of crushing a tyrannical despot; and, he added, "liberty does not belong to Cæsar, it is the right of the people and of human nature." The hatred of tyrants he fully expressed in one of his speeches, when he exclaimed: "kings are, in the moral order, what monsters are in the physical order. Their courts are the workshops of crime, and their history the martyrology of nations." He often quoted the 8th chapter of the 1st of Samuel, as exhibiting a faithful picture of a monarch. He voted for the king's death conscientiously, and used to say, "I condemned him as a senator, but I would have sacrificed my life to have saved him as a man."

Gregoire's appearance was most austere, and even clerical.—He generally wore a long black or purple surtout, buttoned up to the throat, with a white stock. A Jansenist, and a determined enemy of the Jesuits, he used often to make what he called a pilgrimage to the ruins of Port Royal, and to the Tennis-Court at Versailles, where he once presided at the States, when they were threatened with destruction, urging them to be calm in the midst of danger, exclaiming: "*Impavidum ferent ruinæ.*" To his stern remarks, I used to listen with reverential attention; and when my poor mother was told that he was most pious, she could not reconcile his notions of religion with what she considered the respect due to the anointed of the Lord.

The sanguinary excesses of the massacre of September, added to the horror that pervaded every class of society. Yet, strange to say, notwithstanding the universal indignation that filled every generous breast—when one hundred determined armed citizens might have saved all these miserable victims—not a man stirred from his fire-side—not a drum beat to arms—not a bell sounded the alarm, to muster the National Guard, and prevent the perpetration

of one of the most atrocious proceedings in the annals of a country's outbreaks.

On this occasion, as on many others, wherever one met with pompous and sentimental verbiage, he rarely witnessed corresponding actions. Thus, the men of action of the northern provinces overthrew all the eloquent orators of the south. The members of the Montagne were stern and inflexible enthusiasts, who never temporized or hesitated. "*Whoever hesitates is lost,*" was the axiom of these determined, wholesale reformers; to which they added the fearful maxim of Barrère—"*Il n'y a que les morts qui ne reviennent pas.*" They had drawn the revolutionary sword, and cast its scabbard to the winds —it had slaughtered the prisoners who were supposed to be hostile to the Revolution—it was deemed necessary to render the gulf that separated the hostile parties impassable.

Much has been said and written on the massacre in the prisons, which continued uninterrupted for seven days. This infernal act was planned by Marat, Danton, Santerre, and Billaut Varennes. They had hired an attorney, of the name of Maillard, to direct it. This outcast

organized the murderers, who chiefly consisted of a number of the *héros* of the 10th of August, many of whom were *Fédérés* from Marseilles and other towns in the south of France, and they were aided by hired assassins, some of whom received about 24 francs a day, paid by the commune of Paris, and Danton and Marat's agents.

Infamous as it was, this crime was extenuated in some degree by many wise and good men. It must be recollected that the Duke of Brunswick, in his manifesto, had threatened the destruction of Paris. Upwards of 150,000 allies of the King were advancing on the frontiers, whilst the Royalist forces in the departments, led on by nobles, but chiefly by priests, were also menacing the capital; a levy *en masse* had been decreed, and every man able to bear arms was ordered to meet the invaders. At this moment, the prisons were crowded with nobles and ecclesiastics, who were well known to belong to the party of the Counter-Revolutionists, ready to join their confederates on their entrance into the capital; the general cry, therefore, in the Assembly, the Commune, and among the people, supported the

denunciation of Danton, who exclaimed, "We will not retreat; we will perish in the ruins of Paris, but our enemies shall perish before us." A commission was issued, directing the arrest of all suspicious persons; the barriers or gates of Paris were closed, and guard-boats rowed up and down the river, to prevent the escape of any royalists or aristocrats. Domiciliary visits were ordered—every citizen was enjoined to denounce any person whom he suspected, and every one not found at home when his residence was searched, was to be considered as a conspirator, and treated as such. Danton demanded 60,000 heads.

Every speech in the Convention craved for blood, and Billaud Varennes exclaimed, "The most dangerous assassin is the one who resides in our house, and we can only prevent the premeditated murder of the social body, by the destruction of the conspirators." After the massacre, the most eloquent of the Deputies, even the smooth-tongued Barrère, not only excused the atrocity on the plea of necessity, but considered it indispensable and meritorious.

During this fearful confusion and general fermentation, the enemy was advancing: 60,000 Prussians were moving on Luxembourg and

Longwy; 40,000 Austrians were marching on the right flank of the Prussians, and 10,000 Hessians operating on their left, while several columns of emigrants, under the Prince of Condé, were rapidly concentrating on different points. To oppose this formidable force, the French had only about 43,000 undisciplined troops, left in a state of confusion and anarchy by Lafayette. Longwy had already surrendered, and, had not dissension arisen, respecting the plan of campaign, between the King of Prussia and the Duke of Brunswick, in all probability the combined armies would have encountered but little difficulty in marching upon the capital. Thus the tumultuous inhabitants of the capital, excited by the frantic *Fédérés*, who were preparing to take their departure, were driven to desperation by the fomentors of the horrible project of massacring the prisoners, for the purpose of striking terror into the minds of their domestic enemies, and who assured them that, when they had quitted their homes to meet the common foe, the nobles and priests who still remained in the country would be liberated, and destroy, in their hate and revenge, the wives and children of the country's defenders.

This diabolical project of the wholesale butchery of all that were even suspected of being counter-revolutionists was, no doubt, conceived, and mainly carried into execution by the Republican party, and, to a certain extent, the nation might claim some exemption from the odious accusation of having perpetrated the unparalleled atrocity; yet France, notwithstanding the apologies of her historians, must bear its bloody responsibility. I have no hesitation in asserting, that the great mass of the people approved of the immolation of those whom they had been taught to consider their enemies. On this revolting occasion, the people, one and all, men, women, and children, displayed a natural ferocity; they crowded, and danced, and sung the *Carmagnole*, round the mangled corpses of the victims. Gorged with blood and liquor, mothers and their little ones were seated on the heaps of dead, that loaded the tumbrils that removed them. The National Guard, the Gendarmes, who guarded the prisoners, provided both with arms and amunition, cheerfully surrendered their sacred trust to a handful of miscreants, without any authority from their commanding officers. Moreover, the

carnage lasted for seven days, without any opposition on the part of the civil or military authorities, who thus became, in every moral sense of the word, participators and abettors of the massacre. The assassins were regularly paid and mustered; and, their work being a job, their emoluments were regulated by the blood they had shed; their murdering they considered and called their work (*leur ouvrage*); and their wives and children brought them their meals at regular hours, wading through clotted blood, and trampling over human bodies. The political, or supposed political criminals dispatched, they still demanded employment, and proceeded to the business of destruction in prisons and asylums, containing persons detained for debt or misdemeanours, lunatics, prostitutes, and paupers—they heeded not the nature of the offence or the accusation—all they wanted was blood. Bicètre was a monster asylum for vagabonds and lunatics; it contained upwards of two thousand inmates, and those they took five nights and five days to butcher. The next day, they proceeded to the Saltpêtrière, another house of correction; there the bloody work recommenced; they massacred all the old

women, and bore away in triumph all the young ones, amongst whom were little girls of ten or twelve years of age, whom they slaughtered, after having satisfied their brutal and sanguinary lust. Pétion, the Mayor of Paris, and the ruffian, Santerre, made their appearance, and addressed the ferocious band; but this was a mere mockery of humanity; they had no armed force to support them; when two hundred of the National Guard and a few detachments of Gendarmes might have put an end to the ferocious proceeding. Now, the great error of not amalgamating the people with the *bourgeoisie* became evident. The people joined the hired assassins; and the Burgher Guard would not oppose either, dreading the desperate confederation of all the vagabonds in the town, who, having nothing to lose, had every thing to expect.

It is impossible that all the eloquence of the historian can wipe off this foul stain from the character of the French nation. I have already observed, that the momentous state of affairs—despair, terror, might have led a mob to massacre their supposed enemies; but neither despair nor terror can turn human beings into cannibals.

They drank the blood of their victims, mingled with wine, and brandy, and gunpowder. They tore out their hearts, and devoured them; and mark! none of those Anthropophagi had suffered any injury from these victims of their ferocity; they were hired labourers in the field of carnage. Mangin, a drummer, of the Section du Temple, broiled the heart of the beautiful Princesse de Lamballe, and ate it *en carbonnade.* I heard the ruffian boast of it. This wretch I afterwards found in London—a *royalist emigré!* a fencing-master in the Haymarket!!

It must also be borne in mind, that this massacre was not confined to the capital. A band of murderers proceeded to Orleans, Versailles, Meaux, Rheims, and other towns, where the population—the municipal authorities—the National Guard—allowed them either to slaughter or bear away the prisoners in their jails. No sophistic ingenuity can absolve a nation from the foul imputation of having countenanced this carnage; nay, had they not approved of it, they had ample means of protecting the sacred persons of untried prisoners; and I have no

hesitation in saying, that I do not believe that there breathes a people on the face of the earth who could have been guilty, under any circumstances, of similar crimes. In the excitement of battle, in the struggles of an internicine war, it can readily be conceived that many unpardonable acts of cruelty and vengeance may be exercised; but such a cold-blooded slaughter could only be perpetrated by Frenchmen, whether in the prisons of France, or in the caverns of Algeria! I repeat it, an infuriated and drunken soldiery, accustomed to deeds of blood, may be guilty of many a revolting act, in which a spirit of mischief is often combined with a ferocious recklessness; but when we behold thousands of women and children glorying and mingling in the carnage, we must, however reluctantly, conclude that the thirst for blood is a national appetite.

The adoration paid to the sanguinary monster, Marat—not only by the people, but by the legislature—his apotheosis as a divinity; the general mourning that followed his immolation by that glorious martyr of liberty, Charlotte Corday, the tears that were shed in torrents over the cannibal's tomb, and

the urn provided to contain his execrable heart, which was called the "precious relic of a God," these are not the acts of hired bravos, or of an injured and hungry populace. They are national characteristics, and as such, must be recorded in the annals of the land. Nor can these atrocious feelings be compensated by an occasional display of humanity and of clemency. They only showed the instability of a people, ever ready to commit the most odious crimes, or to be moved by accents of pity and generosity by the leaders of the day whose evil or good passions exercise a plastic power over their vacillating mind.

There can be no doubt, at the same time, that many acts which appear to be of a sanguinary and wanton nature, might have been necessitated by the fearful situation of the country on which I have already dwelt. In the constant struggle for power, when parties are waging against each other a war implacable—the destruction of an antagonist, either in the field or on the scaffold, may be considered an inevitable, nay, an indispensable act of vigour and of determination; for in that case, one of the parties must destroy the other, and even the conqueror must

fall in time before a more powerful opponent. It is a melancholy fact, but in times of revolutions and violence, victory in the cabinet must be obtained by the same means as victory in the field, when even prisoners may be sacrificed. But on this occasion the French massacred prisoners who were utterly unconscious of ever having been hostile to them in word or deed!

During these sad events, a contempt of life seemed to pervade the land, and the most reckless acts of revenge for private injuries, supposed or well founded, were perpetrated by persons considered humane and quiet. A singular instance of this nature was related to me at the Théâtre de la Nation. Préville, the celebrated comic actor, had retired from the stage at an advance period of life, and lived at Senlis. He belonged to a company of *Arquebusiers* (riflemen) composed of citizens, who went to amuse themselves occasionally in firing at a target. One evening, when they were proceeding to their exercise-ground, a fire was opened upon them from the window of a house, that killed and wounded several of the party. They rushed into the dwelling, but

scarcely had they crossed the threshold, when a mine exploded, and blew up, not only several of the riflemen, but the landlord himself. This miscreant was a watchmaker, who had been turned out of the company for misconduct, and he thus revenged himself, perishing with his foes. Poor Préville, on this occasion, was amongst the crowd, and deprived of the sight of one eye.

It was for the gratification of a revengeful spirit, that thousands were sacrificed during the Reign of Terror, whose death was attributed to the leaders of the Montagne; when, in fact, these unfortunate victims of private resentment had been denounced to, or by, the revolutionary committees of the sections, formed of infuriated Jacobins, whose clamorous demands could not be resisted by the parties who owed their power to their support. Any unfortunate person denounced to the committee of *Salut Public* or *Súreté Génerale* as a suspected, or an aristocrat, was doomed to decapitation. Many of the political leaders of the day, have therefore been accused of acts of wanton cruelty, which, in truth, they had not committed; and,

on the other hand, suspected persons, whose lives were perilled, denounced others to save themselves, and obtain a certificate of *civisme*.

There were upwards of forty thousand revolutionary committees in France, each formed of twelve of the most desperate and blood-thirsty ruffians of the town. Their line of duty was traced by the *Réprésentants du Peuple* sent to the Departments by the *Comité de Salut Public*, and they were, moreover, subject to the influence of the *Sociétés Populaires*, ramifications of the Jacobin Club, with which they were in constant communication. Thus a net-work of destruction was cast over the land, and happy were those who could extricate themselves from its meshes.

It may be easily imagined that private animosities were thus gratified, when men had the power of sacrificing those who had injured them, or even offended their vanity. A striking instance of this revengeful spirit, was displayed in the case of Collot d'Herbois. This monster had been an actor, and hissed off the stage at Lyons. When that city revolted, and Fouché and Couthon were sent to subdue the insurrection by destroying the town, Collot

d'Herbois volunteered his services, and was inflexible in the fearful vengeance that visited that unfortunate city. When the artillery were opening upon it, and its buildings were in flames, he encouraged the gunners, and often exclaimed, as the conflagration spread in its most wealthy quarters, "You'll not hiss me again, gentlemen!"

Such was the ferocity of this wretch, that, when heaps of dead and dying were interred with scarcely any earth scattered over their palpitating remains, and he walked over their shallow graves, and saw the ground moved by the convulsions of some of his agonized victims buried alive, he would plunge his sword in it and dispatch them with his own hand.

This Collot d'Herbois was the determined enemy of every actor whom he could accuse, and denounced several performers of the *Théâtre Français;* amongst whom were the most popular players, Dazincourt, Fleury, Louise and Emilie Contat, Lange, and Raucourt.

The following letter from him was found in the papers of Fouquier Tinville, the *accusateur public* of the Revolutionary Tribunal.

"Le comité t'envoie, Citoyen, les pièces concernant les ci-devant comédiens Français : tu sais, ainsi que tous les patriotes, combien ces gens-là sont *contre-révolutionnaires ;* tu les mettras en jugement le 13 Messidor. A l'égard des autres, il y en a quelques-uns parmi eux qui ne méritent que la déportation ; au surplus, nous verrons ce qu'il en faudra faire, après que ceux-ci auront été jugés.

Salut et Fraternité,

COLLOT D'HERBOIS."

Fortunately for these intended victims of the histrioni's malevolence, the accusatory documents were destroyed in a most singular manner by an official of the Committee, of the name of Labussière. This extraordinary personage had been an officer in the army, and then a comic actor at one of the minor theatres. He met with many strange adventures, and became an *employé* in the *Bureau des Correspondences,* which received denunciations from the Departments, together with what they called *notes individuelles,* on which the members of the Committee grounded their accusation when sending prisoners to be tried. It was in this

office, that the charges against these actors fell into his hands, and he destroyed them in a most ingenious manner. It was during the summer. There was no fire to consume them; moreover, the smell of burned papers, and their ashes, would have led to suspicion, and probably to detection. He, therefore, concealed these documents under his shirt, and repaired to one of the baths on the river. There he took a bath and soaked the papers in hot water, until they were reduced to a pulp. Then he rolled them up in little pellets, and, casting them into the bath, on pulling up the plug, they were drawn away into the current.

Not only these comedians, but a considerable number of persons, in whom Labussière took an interest, were saved by similar means. This loss of documents to try prisoners was complained of by Fouquier Tinville in the following letter, in which he expresses his fears that there were traitors in the Committee, who impeded the execution of the counter-revolutionists.

"Ce 5 Thermidor, an 11 de la République
" Française, une et indivisible.

" LIBERTÉ, EGALITÉ ou la MORT.

" L'accusateur public près le Tribunal Révolutionnaire.

"Aux Citoyens, membres représentants du peuple, chargés de la police générale.

"Citoyens Représentants!

"La dénonciation qui a été faite, ces jours derniers à la tribune de la convention n'est que trop vraie; votre bureau de détenus n'est composé que de Royalistes et de contre-révolutionnaires, qui entravent le marche des affaires.

"Depuis environ dix mois, il y a un désordre total dans les pièces du comité; sur trente individus qui me sont désignés, pour être jugés, il en manque presque toujours la moitié ou les deux tiers, et quelquefois d'avantage. Dernièrement encore, tout Paris s'attendait à la mise en jugement des Comédiens Français, et je n'ai encore rien reçu de relatif à cette affaire, les représentants Couthon et Collot m'en avaient cependant parlé. J'attends des ordres à cet égard.

"Il m'est impossible de mettre en jugement aucun détenu sans les pièces qui m'en indiquent au moins le nom et la prison, etc.

"Salut et Fraternité,

"FOUQUIER TINVILLE."

There can be no doubt that the seceding

performers of the French theatre were opposed to the Revolution, and had displayed much rashness in the manifestation of their opinions. On several occasions, they refused to obey the orders of the Municipality, and resisted the outrageous demands of the ruffians who crowded the *parterre* for popular songs, &c. These fellows went by the names of *tapes dur*, or *knock-hards*. They were dressed in the costume called the *Carmagnole*, which consisted of a jacket and trousers of coarse woollen cloth, and a red cap on their head, and they generally brandished a bludgeon, which they called a "*Constitution*." On many occasions these bandits, who were under pay, would interrupt the performance, and apostrophise the performers. Such was the case when the *Comédiens Français* were arrested. The play was *Pamela*, in which was the following passage:—

"Ah! les persécuteurs sont les seuls condamnables,
Et les plus tolérants sont les plus raisonables."

To which Fleury replied,—

"Tous les honnêtes gens sont d'accord la-dessus."

On which, a ferocious-looking fellow threat-

ened the actor, and exclaimed, "*Citoyen*, this counter-revolutionary expression is not in the play."

Fleury replied, "I assure you, *Monsieur*, that I speak the author's words." This aristocratic word, *Monsieur*, produced an outrageous uproar. The ruffian who had addressed him quitted the house, and soon after returned with a detachment of the Section, and arrested all the performers, who were immediately transferred to the prison of the Madelonettes.

My friend Dugazon was at that time aide-de-camp to Henriot, and in justice to him it must be stated, that he, together with Mademoiselle Devienne, exerted themselves to serve their former comrades; nor were Talma and Monvel wanting in their endeavours. It must also be stated that, after the massacre of September, the theatre closed for eighteen nights, and it re-opened with a piece of Vigié's, called "*La Matinée d'un jolie Femme!*"

The stage, at the different epochs of the Revolution, became mainly instrumental in forwarding the views of each succeeding party. It was on the boards that the clergy were attacked and turned into ridicule in the plays of *Les Victimes*

Cloîtrées, Les Visitandines, &c. &c., while Royalty and despotism were arraigned in the *Mahomet,* and the *Mort de César* of Voltaire; the *Charles IX.* of Chenier, *Timoléon,* &c. The drama was equally active in propagating Republican ideas, and a theatre in the centre of the Palais National (formerly the Palais Royal) brought out pantomimes to keep up popular excitement. On festive days, the play-houses were thrown open gratis, and the performance announced on the bills—*de part et pour le peuple.* On these occasions, the houses were crowded to the ceiling, and a hired clique distributed to applaud every allusion favourable to the views of their employers, or to call for national tunes. Crowds of boisterous *poissardes* and *tricoteuses** were clustered in the boxes, and one night a fish-woman, who had never been to a theatre but in the gallery, called *le Paradis,* being in a stage box, and seeing the prompter's head appearing out of his trap, exclaimed,

* *Les tricoteuses,* or *knitters,* were those fiends in female form, who used to attend the popular clubs, knitting mechanically stockings or garters, while attending to the infuriated outpourings of their orators, and greeting their denunciations with shrieks of approbation.

"*Tiens! regardez ce sacré chien là, qui a fait un trou au théâtre pour avoir de la place!*"

In this fearful tragedy, everything was dramatic, and got up as a spectacle, both to excite and amuse the people, by working at the same time on their good and evil passions; and, while blood was demanded on all sides, the most philanthropic exhibitions were displayed to move the gentler feelings of mankind. Thus, in their processions, you would see the cradles of foundlings carried in triumph, and decked with flowers; aged and decrepid men and women crowned with oak-leaves, leaning on young maidens clad in virgin robes; the deaf and dumb signifying their delight by signs, and bearing the bust of l'Abbé de l'Epée—the blind, led by little boys, who also bore the effigy of Sicard, their teacher; triumphal cars, laden with the produce of the earth, agricultural and horticultural implements, and surrounded by labourers, vine-dressers, shepherds and shepherdesses; and then would follow trophies of the spoils of tyranny—broken thrones—mutilated figures of Kings; shattered armorial bearings, chains and manacles, piled up with crowns and sceptres. In these pageants were

also carried funeral urns, supposed to contain the ashes of the brave, who had fallen in the defence of their country, with women and children holding lachrymatory vases; while on numerous banners were inscribed the names of the warriors, or the supposed statesmen who had deserved well of their country.

Amongst the melo-dramatic performers, a miscreant of the name of Nicholas, who had been a model at the Academy—a fellow with a magnificent head and long beard, dressed himself as a Grecian slave, and figured in every bloody transaction of the times. This maniac commenced his atrocious career by chopping off the heads of the *gardes du corps*, who were killed by the mob at Versailles, and used to call himself sometimes Cincinnatus, and at other times Mutius Scœvola—a name which made the boys who followed him, shout out, "Monsieur Cervelat!" for the rabble looked upon him as an idiot.

Not unfrequently these diabolical excesses of the mob were diversified with what they considered comic interludes. Thus, when the wretched Foulon was dragged to the town-house —as he had been heard to say, during the scarcity

of provisions, that the people might be fed on hay or thistles, they made him crawl on all fours, put a collar of thistles round his neck, loaded him with trusses of hay, and led him by a horse-collar to the Place du Grêve. The most execrable obscenity was often exhibited in their Saturnalia of blood.

In fact, the people, constantly excited, and paid without the necessity of working, had no time to reflect on the probable issue of passing events; while the middle and upper classes, in incessant apprehension of losing their lives, could scarcely bestow a thought on the sufferings of others, that merely foreboded their own sad destinies.

CHAPTER VI.

Trial of Louis XVI—His execution—His speech to the people on the scaffold stopped by a natural son of Louis XV—Reflections on those events—The iron chest—Character of the King and Queen—General considerations—Commencement of the Reign of Terror.

The events of the 10th of August, and the massacre of September, were the prelude of the condemnation and execution of the unfortunate Louis XVI. This catastrophe had been anticipated by every one who maturely considered the state of the country, and the struggle of the different factions that contended for power.

The general anxiety that prevailed during the trial, could only be equalled by the consternation that his execution spread over the land. The prestige attached to royalty had not lost its magic influence over the people, who, notwithstanding the

fearful convulsions that had shaken the throne, still held in a sort of reverential respect the name of King. The populace, joined and instigated in their excesses by the Republican party, were, no doubt, loud in their denunciations of despotism—for Royalty and despotism were to them synonimous; but still the upper and the middle classes of Paris were, more or less, attached to the *grand monarque.* A Republic appeared to them a problem of difficult solution. It was thought an impossibility—an idle vision of by-gone days. It seemed to many as unnatural for a country to exist without a monarch, as for children to be born without a father or mother. Therefore, on this occasion, every countenance bore the impress of grief and despair. Terror had sealed the lips of many; but the vacant aspect of horror, the mournful and elongated features of young and old, of men and women, bore a resemblance to that look of fearful anxiety which we should expect to observe in a multitude threatened with a renewed shock of a destructive earthquake, ready to engulph those who had escaped a previous convulsion of nature.

On the day of the execution, every shop was closed; a deadly stillness reigned throughout the streets, although throngs of curious people were threading their way, in mournful silence, towards the Boulevards, and the quarters through which the dismal *cortège* was to proceed towards the place of execution—the Place Louis XV—then called Place de la Révolution, where the guillotine was erected.

Although no apprehension could be entertained of any popular outbreak, or bold attempt of the Royalists, with a sufficient force, to rescue their King, yet measures were taken by the Republicans that seemed to indicate the fear of some *coup-de-main* to snatch their victim from their fangs. Every street leading to the Boulevards was occupied by troops, posted by Santerre, and cannon planted in different stations, by which the sad procession was to pass.

With my faithful Coté, whose democratic energies were now damped by the solemnity of the day, and who, notwithstanding his endeavours to appear indifferent, was every now and then sobbing and wiping off a falling tear,

I went to the corner of the Rue Michaudière, and took up my station before the Bains Chinois. I cannot describe what my feelings were on that memorable occasion. I felt as though I were witnessing the agonized death of a dear friend or a parent. It was not pity, for, young as I was, from all that I had heard around me, I looked upon the unfortunate Prince as guilty; but still there lingered about the name and appearance of majesty that feeling of respect which our plastic education impresses on the mind of the masses, who do not consider that a sovereign is no more than the chief magistrate of a country.

The morning was bitterly cold and misty. The approach of the column was announced by a thundering roll of drums—it appeared to me that there must have been more than a hundred drummers; while now and then a flourish of trumpets added to the solemnity of the gloomy music of this unmelodious death-march. Thousands of National Guards and *fédérés*, followed by the populace of the Faubourgs, armed with pikes, and two brigades of field-pieces, preceded the immediate escort of the condemned monarch. The carriage he was in

was nearly concealed by the mounted Gendarmes that surrounded it, so that I could not catch a glimpse of his person. Santerre, with a numerous staff, followed, and the march was closed by hosts of soldiers belonging to the National Guard and the line, in marching order.

Notwithstanding the general excitement kept up by the Republican party, both by the distribution of money and of liquor, a dead silence prevailed. Not a cry was heard during the progress of the funereal procession to the place of execution. One might have thought that the freezing atmosphere of the day had benumbed every tongue. However, the Commune and Santerre had stationed their satellites round the scaffold in great numbers; and then it was that the vociferations of this ruffian crew, —amongst whom the *Septembriseurs*, and the most violent *fédérés*, from Marseilles and Bordeaux, were the most conspicuous—rent the air.

Contemporary historians have amply related the details of this melancholy sacrifice; but the execution of Louis XVI, was attended by a casual circumstance, which must lead to the

most solemn reflections on the mysterious ways of Providence and its retributive justice, and teach a fearful lesson to mankind. When Louis XVI, attempted to address the mob that crowded around the scaffold, he was instantly interrupted by a loud roll of drums. The order was said to proceed from Santerre—this was not the case—the command that silenced the last appeal of Louis XVI to his former subjects, issued from the lips of one of the *natural sons of Louis XV.*, le Comte d'Oyat, who was then *Chef d'Etat-Major.* Strange! awful coincidence!

After the execution, a vast number of people rushed to the scaffold and dipped handkerchiefs in the royal blood; these relics, for such were they considered by many, were sold in bits and scraps, at the most exorbitant prices; and the *révendeuses à la toilette,* made it a lucrative branch of trade in the aristocratic families they frequented, where the precious drops were sold in solemn secrecy, and no doubt, the blood of sheep and pigs was frequently dearly purchased, as *le sang de St. Louis.*

The execution of this unfortunate monarch has now become matter of history; and in future ages will be viewed in various lights

according to the time in which the historian lives; so powerful is the influence of existing circumstances and institutions on both public and private opinion, according to the oscillations of political doctrines.

I was very young at the time; but in my father's house the subject had been continually discussed both by French and English visitors. I have since conversed on the event with men of all parties, and have read the opinions of many political writers of various factions. Therefore, although I am not writing history, I may be allowed to venture on some observations on this most important feature of the French Revolution.

The principal question to be mooted, was: first, was the King guilty or innocent of the charges brought against him; secondly, had the assembly, or the representatives of the nation, a right to try him; and thirdly, if guilty, what was the sentence that ought, in justice and in prudence, to be passed upon him. In this inquiry, we must dismiss all ideas of humanity. Revolutions, like battles, are never influenced by that consideration. *Expediency* has superseded the obsolete word in a statesman's lexicon; and

indeed, in many instances, mistaken humanity and ill-judged clemency lead to much greater loss of blood, and to more disastrous events, fraught with paramount misery—not only to our country but to mankind, than an indispensable sacrifice.

That this unfortunate monarch was guilty of some of the charges brought against him, there can be no doubt. On the other hand, it was alleged that he was fully exonerated, by his inviolability, from any acts of his ministers and officers. This inviolability had been claimed by his defenders, and became the subject of long and furious debates, for the proceedings of the Convention during this momentous crisis, displayed all the virulence of party spirit and of personal ambition and hostility. In fact, it was a contest for power between the Girondins and the Montagnards—the former appealing to the more sober sense of the nation;—the latter, exciting universal terror through the instrumentality of the Jacobin club, and its affiliated popular societies.

Still both Girondins and Montagnards wished for a Republic, and had decided either the downfall of the Monarch, or his death.

Many departments had sent not only petitions to the Convention, to spare the king's life, but a vast number of *Fédérés* had flocked to the capital and loudly professed the interest they took in his fate. This re-action, the Jacobins met by a corresponding excitement, and threats, not only of renewed massacres in the prisons, but of the destruction of every member of the Convention who did not vote for death, were held out in every quarter of the metropolis.

There could be no doubt that Louis XVI. had broken every promise he had made to the nation; —no doubt that, although he had sufficient wisdom to see that a change in the government of the country was not only loudly demanded, but indispensable—he most reluctantly pledged himself to promote this reform, both in Church and State. In regard to the Church, he had consented to its spoliation, not only against his conscience, but contrary to the solemn injunction of his immediate spiritual advisers; and in opposition to the express command of the Pope, and he only exempted himself from excommunication by retaining a refractory clergy

about him, a downright infraction of the laws he had sanctioned.*

That he had corresponded not only with the members of his family, and the nobles who had emigrated, but with foreign powers requesting their armed intervention to maintain his rights and crush his enemies, was a fact that could not be denied; and what rendered this breach of the mutual faith between him and the people, still more condemnable, was the circumstance that, at the very time when he was thus inviting a destructive invasion of his country—an invasion in which fire and sword would have

* Educated by La Vauguyon, Louis XVI. was most unquestionably a bigot, and under the influence of Jesuitical advisers, who sometimes drove him to madness. The clergy about him, went so far as to tell him, that the death of the Dauphin had been a divine punishment for his having solicited the aid and the councils of Protestant advisers; more especially Necker, whom they accused, in their blind fury, of having caused a famine for the mere purpose of accelerating the march of the Revolution; while it is well known that he had disposed of his property and raised money on his own account to procure provisions for the people. This is the man whom the clergy of France called, in derision, the *virtuous reformer;* and accused of having kept large quantities of corn afloat until they had become rotten, when he allowed them to be carried to market!

devastated the kingdom, while the emigrants, and the expatriated clergy would have avenged their wrongs by the most fearful examples, he was ostensibly taking steps to organize his armies and oppose his allies. But he was a weak man, incapable of coming to any firm resolve, easily influenced by his proud Queen, in whose veins the blood of Maria Theresa flowed in turbulent circulation; and he had been persuaded that regular armies would easily discomfit the hasty levies of an undisciplined population. He might, otherwise, have come to the conclusion that he ought frankly and honestly to have moved with the tide of public opinion, and not attempted to breast a torrent that would inevitably sweep away all opposition; or, if he could not conscientiously act in concert with the people—abdication became a duty which he owed both to himself and to his subjects.

Sad experience had taught him this lesson; but too late. In his generous and truly christianly will, he thus expresses himself in his injunctions to the poor Dauphin, "let him remember, that he can only make his subjects happy by reigning according to the laws of the land; but when a king can no longer cause these laws to be

respected—from being opposed in his actions, and no longer respected by his subjects, he becomes more injurious than useful to the country."

Such should have been his conviction when he fled from Paris to join the army of Bouillé, one of his most faithful and devoted officers. It was idle to suppose, for a moment, that he depended solely upon the troops who served under this General, who was himself convinced that he could only place confidence in the foreign contingents of his command. Therefore, it is obvious that he would have crossed the frontier, and headed the foreign legions, to re-conquer his throne. By this flight, he had virtually abdicated; and the most fatal error of the Constituent Assembly was, the not pronouncing his abdication, and at once proclaiming a Republican form of government. Such a decided line of conduct would not only have saved the Royal Family from their sad destiny, but have spared France and Europe many a fearful catastrophe. This want of firmness and decision on the part of the Assembly, led to the eventual destruction of every contending faction.

It may be said, and perhaps with truth, that the Assembly wished for a constitutional monarchy, founded on the same principles as our Constitution, which is ever held out as a model for the legislature of every nation anxious to shake off the yoke of a despotic power, forgetting that our constitution has been the result of centuries, and not the deposit of a volcanic eruption. Moreover, there are few nations fit to emerge from the thraldom of despotism, or the darkness of fanaticism, to claim an assumption of a people's rights, and suddenly face the dazzling light of religious reformation, and entertain a philosophic view of fanaticism and superstition.

The French nation more especially were essentially unfit to enjoy the blessings of a free government. Accustomed to abject subjection, without the check of a middle class to stand between the powerful and the weak, the wealthy and the needy; it must have been foreseen, that so soon as their chains were broken, they would hurl the fragments of their fetters, in frantic enthusiasm, at all who dared to oppose their licentiousness. Thus, their Legislators were Utopian dreamers, and the people an ignorant and infuriated rabble of emancipated

slaves, unable to reflect, and prompt to follow any turbulent adventurer. To add to the utter impracticability of any settled form of government, when surrounded with such clashing elements of universal discord, the Assembly committed a national suicide, by their absurd decree that rendered their members ineligible to any succeeding representation of the people. Thus many great and wise men abdicated a power, rendered more efficient by daily experience, into the hands of ambitious intriguers, and ardent and intemperate youths, fresh from the benches of college, and inspired with all the stilted enthusiasm of ancient Greece and Rome, who seized the helm of public affairs, till the vessel of the State was wrecked on the wild ocean of chaotic confusion, in a chartless expedition in search of liberty.

To return to the painful consideration of these melancholy events. The King's defenders could not claim his inviolability. The inviolability of a monarch only attaches to the ostensible acts of his Government, and the conduct of his Ministers, who act in his name, and are supposed to do so with his consent, under their advice; but a King cannot claim the preroga-

tive of being held irresponsible for private acts of his own, unknown to his Ministers, and resorted to without their consent. When Louis XVI. and his family pressed the sovereigns of Europe to come to their assistance, to punish the rebellious subjects of the former, and to restore him all the plenitude of his power—when, in fact, he called for the destruction of the land, and the slaughter of the brave who had wished to defend their mother country from the sword of the despoiler,—these were acts of the King himself, for which he alone could be held answerable.

The question is not, whether a King deprived of his power, robbed of his attributes, shorn of all the splendour of his throne, had not a right to seek to re-conquer what he had lost. Most undoubtedly, it was a natural effort on his part to grasp the reins of former authority, if he could; but if, in this struggle for authority, he failed—if he had not been able to deluge the country with blood—to bring the Prussians and the Austrians to protect his person, and crush his people,—the victorious people, or their representatives, had an undeniable right to consider that the contract formed between the monarch

and the country had been broken, and that their monarch, reduced by his own acts to the condition of a simple citizen, was amenable to the charge of treason against the State.

In his own opinion, this ill-fated Prince, the scape-goat of his profligate predecessors, thought, no doubt that, in calling in the foreigner, he was consulting the best interests of the country; while seeking, at the same time, to recover his lost power. Nay, it is possible that he was right in this view of the matter; for, certainly, all the excesses of a foreign army could not have inflicted greater misery on the country than the execrable atrocities of the factions that tore its bosom for many years, and the odious military despotism that succeeded them. Still he was guilty of having sought to expose his country to all the horrors of a vindictive invasion and a civil war.

He was also guilty of bribing Mirabeau and other statesmen. This was proved by the papers found in an iron chest in the Palace. But here, again, he was excusable, for there was no crime in seeking to obtain support, when assailed on all sides by his enemies. But there was a circumstance respecting this iron chest,

trifling in itself, but which materially injured his cause in the opinion of his friends. There was a dereliction of truth in denying that he knew of the existence of this mysterious deposit, which he himself had placed in a secret place of concealment. The history of this iron box is rather curious.

Louis XVI, it was well known, was a most expert locksmith, and, having these important papers to conceal, he discovered a niche behind the wainscot of one of his private chambers, in which he deposited them. Not able to enclose it by himself, he called in the aid of a workman who had often done various little jobs for him in the Château, and on whom he had heaped many acts of kindness. In this man he thought, and not without just reason, that he might confide. It so happened, however, that the fellow being over-heated by his work, the King gave him a glass of wine-and-water. This wine was Malaga, and, of a description unknown to him, had an extra-ordinary taste. He experienced a sudden chill, and went home much indisposed. His health gradually declined, and he imagined that the King had given him some slow poison to get

rid of so dangerous a witness. Under the influence of this apprehension, he confided the suspicion to his wife, who immediately repaired to Roland, then in the administration, who sought the workman, and, accompanied by him, lost no time in going to the Tuileries, when the secret recess was pointed out to him, and he bore away the papers, which he submitted to the Convention. Such, alas! was the excitement of the times, and the horror which this unfortunate Prince inspired in the minds of the vulgar, that this poor creature verily believed that the King had been base enough to destroy him, while his wife, seeing him daily sinking under disease, encouraged the horrible suspicion!

Truth, even amongst the falsest of mankind, is respected, and the King's positive denial of his knowledge of this concealed box, produced a profound sentiment of disgust, which, in a great measure, neutralized his noble bearing on this solemn occasion.

We now come to consider, whether the Convention had a right to try the King, as the representatives of the nation, and the framers of its laws. They constituted the first tribunal

in the land. They were the appointed guardians of the people's rights and safety, and as such, it is clear that they had the power of sitting in judgment on a Prince, arraigned on a charge of high treason against the State and the integrity of his country. He was brought to trial by a national decree, and most unquestionably the nation had a right to judge him.

It was on this principle that many Deputies voted for an appeal to the people, through the organ of the forty-four thousand Sections of the country. This proposal was overruled, on the ground that the difference of opinions between the monarch's friends and foes, would inevitably lead to a civil war, and there is no doubt that such would have been the case, without any favourable result for the King, who would, to a certainty, have been murdered by the populace of Paris.

Found guilty by a majority of sixty-six votes, the sentence to be pronounced on him became a question of vital importance. The populace of Paris, excited by the Jacobin party, were in a state of frantic excitement. They demanded the head of Capet, with terrific vociferations.

Armed ruffians surrounded the hall of the Convention. Every Jacobin member who went in, was hailed with uproarious applause. Every deputy whose vote was doubtful, was threatened with death, and could only penetrate the hall under the protection of an escort. Under this threat, the Girondins, who well deserved their future fate, were base enough to do the work of their antagonists; and not only did not oppose the fatal condemnation, but, to the astonishment, even of the most violent enemies of the fallen sovereign, their leader, Vergniaud, voted for his death!

Had the ill-fated Monarch been tried by ballot, there cannot be the least doubt but this sentence would not have been passed. Many Deputies acted under the influence of terror; in the gallery there were furies in the form of women, who were pricking the votes on cards, and when the ushers called out a name, it was immediately transmitted to the mob, amidst yells of execration or shouts of triumph. The populace, satisfied with the majority they had obtained, had no reason to notice those who had voted against their wishes, and their leaders

exerted themselves to prevent any excess, on the ground that the security of the friends of Capet might show that a fair trial had been given him. Strange to say, few of those who boldly voted in favour of the King, or who at any rate sought to gain time by postponing the execution, suffered for their opinions, while the Montagne sacrificed nearly every regicide who, from cowardice or weakness, had assisted them in the bloody deed.

That this sentence was most unjust cannot be denied. That it might have been necessary under the then existing circumstances, becomes a question of difficult solution. This question must be considered in two points of view, national and individual; or rather, how far it was desirable for the welfare of the nation, and its triumph over its external enemies, or for the consolidation of the Jacobin party, or the Montagne, and their victory over their opponents.

It is a matter of doubt, whether the sparing the life of the King would not have caused a civil war, which would have deprived the country of its defenders, engaged in intestine strife, instead of meeting the enemy; thus adding to the

chance of a successful invasion, the distracted state of domestic affairs. The death of the King was likely to put an end to all the hopes entertained by his partisans, who would be crushed or exterminated by the system of terror that was adopted so soon as the Royal head had fallen. The manifesto of the Prussians had threatened the destruction of Paris, and of the whole country, if a hair of the Monarch's head were touched by sacrilegious hands. Now that that head had been taken off, and the scabbard of the sword that struck the blow cast to the wide winds, an impassable abyss had been hewn between France and the Sovereigns of Europe—it became a war of destruction; their legions or France must have been destroyed. An European league was formed against the Republic—its annihilation had been decreed—the Republicans, nay, the mass of the nation, had no option left between a deadly and desperate defence, or extermination. Therefore, the whole country had to rise *en masse* to defend itself, or perish.

The recent victory of Jemappes, when the raw levies of France had attacked one of the best disciplined armies of Europe, commanded by experienced Generals, and occupying a position

rendered, in their opinion, impregnable, had excited a general enthusiasm over the land. Every man able to bear arms was rushing to the conflict, while, on the other hand, the spirit of the enemy was broken—the spell of their invincibility had vanished before the daring and undaunted attack of men, who scarcely knew on which shoulder they were to carry their muskets. Moreover, the proclamation of France against tyranny—the sight of an army, in which a private soldier could aspire in time to the rank of a General—every circumstance tended to demoralize the allies; at the same time, the conduct of the emigrants at Coblentz and other places on the Rhine, profligate and gasconading, had disgusted the people. They fancied that they could act towards the German peasants with the same impunity with which they had treated their French vassals. Even misfortune could not temper their haughty arrogance and insolent demeanour. Their heedless extravagance, at the expense of confiding tradesmen—their impertinence to women and young girls—their own quarrelsome orgies and disgusting ribaldry, had excited the contempt and the indignation of the inhabitants of the towns

where they had congregated: so little confidence was placed in them by the allies, that on many occasions they were not allowed to co-operate with their troops, although it is possible that this exclusion was resorted to, from their intention to conquer France on their own account. Considering this posture of affairs, it was thought by many, that the death of the king would have left no other claimant to the throne, to be raised to power on the bucklers of his adherents and allies, and it was even contemplated to educate the Dauphin as a rough citizen, and send him to fight the battles of his country in the same ranks as the two sons of Egalité.

The disunion and jealousies which prevailed amongst the foreign sovereigns—who already disputed their future share in the booty of the invasion—was also well known; therefore, the death of the king was likely to produce an unity of interests in France, formidable to monarchs thus divided in their selfish speculations.

It is no doubt true, that France herself was torn by internal conflicts; but the Jacobins, decided, bold and desperate in their actions, had determined to establish a system of terror that

should intimidate the most sanguine of their enemies. Every man who dared to regret the fallen monarch—who ventured to express sentiments hostile to the regenerators of the country, (for such they considered themselves) was doomed to die—the axe spared neither age nor sex: their most violent and blood-thirsty companies were sent to the Departments and to the armies, and any general who had been defeated, or who had not followed up a victory, was sent to the guillotine. In short, they had overthrown every existing institution, however ancient and held sacred; and they sought to construct a new edifice, consecrated to Liberty and Equality, out of the scattered fragments of the ruins, cemented with blood and tears.

The fall of the monarch's head was the signal for the universal decapitation of all those who did not join them, hand in hand, in their work of destruction; whoever hesitated was considered a *modéré*, and, therefore, an enemy. This state of things had been prophetically denounced by Fauchet, an ex-priest and one of the deputies, who, when the penalty of death was under consideration, expressed himself in the following words:—"Let us avail ourselves of this oppor-

tunity to annul the barbarous penalty of death. Let us effectually put a stop to the shedding of human blood; and appease that thirst of it, which seems to consume so many perverse individuals bent upon the destruction of the Republic. Recollect that barbarians (Marat, Danton) have asked for one-hundred and fifty-thousand heads: gratify them with the head of the fallen despot, and will you be able to refuse them as many more as they may crave?"

There can be no doubt that this ferocious reign of terror mainly contributed to the protection of the country, both from foreign invasion and the accumulated horrors of civil war; while, to aid this desperate expediency, an artificial famine was kept up, and the people were persuaded that their sufferings arose from the monopoly of the aristocracy. This conviction was displayed by the joy that the populace manifested, whenever a poor wretch accused of being an *accapareur*, or of having sold any article of food at a higher rate, then the celebrated tariff or *maximum*, was conveyed to the scaffold. It may, therefore, be said, that the report of the cannon that announced the fall of

Louis's head, was the signal of a general onslaught on wealth and generous feelings.

This event was also the precursor of a general war: the king was beheaded on the 21st of January, and, the English Government having dismissed the French Ambassador, war was declared by the Convention against England and Holland, on the 1st of February—or eleven days after the execution, thus producing a national rupture with all the States of Europe; and orders were issued to proclaim, in every monarchial country, the sovereignty of the people—the abolition of feudality, of tithes, and all oppressive taxation that weighed on the industrious classes. The war-cry was—"*Guerre aux châteaux—paix aux chaumières.*"

The first step taken by the Montagne and their clubs, was the formation of a Revolutionary tribunal, and the destruction of their opponents—the Girondins. This party had displayed considerable energy in their eloquence, and in their exertions to overthrow the monarchy and establish a Republican form of government; the fond dream of Madame Roland and the faction that formed her *coterie*; but they were not men of action, and certainly ill-calculated

to save the country in the perilous situation in which it was placed.

They were averse to a sanguinary and destructive course, and would have exerted their best endeavours to oppose the system of universal *terrorism* that was about to be adopted, and which their opponents considered indispensible for the external and internal defence of the empire. It is possible that their views were correct, for certainly personal fear, both for life and property, produced a general feeling of heartless egotism, and the sad fate of the Royal Family was soon forgotten in the presence of actual danger, and the sight of daily immolations and ruthless cruelty, exercised on all who ventured to oppose the overwhelming tornado of demagogic fury and recklessness.

In this state of national perplexity, many there were who considered the fallen monarch as the author of their sufferings—some accusing him of having betrayed the cause of the nobility and aristocracy, by his timidity and want of firmness in moments of danger; while others were of opinion that when he ceased to reign, *de facto*, as well as *de jure*, he should have abdicated,

and not have continued to wield a sceptre reduced to a reed, and wear a diadem converted into a crown of thorns.

Louis XVI. was what might have been called a good, easy man, although frequently positive in his will, and violent when contradicted. His judgment was generally sound, and his principles were good. His education, both as an individual and a Prince born to sovereignty, had been sadly neglected. His ideas in both capacities were narrow and prejudiced. He endeavoured, by reading and much application, to make up for this deficiency, and became a tolerable Latin scholar, and possessed a slight knowledge of the English and German languages. He courted solitude, but detested idleness: when he had nothing else to do, he amused himself in various mechanical occupations, but chiefly as a locksmith. Though he entertained a tolerable idea of history and geography, yet he was deplorably ignorant of the fundamental laws of the empire which he governed, dwelling upon events and their progress, without seeking to investigate causes. Although occasionally self-willed in trifling affairs, he yielded to flimsy arguments, and

coincided with the last adviser in matters of moment. He was not remarkably fond of women; yet the Queen, although in some instances, it is said, he had suspected her fidelity, exercised over him an irresistible power. He watched her looks, and anticipated her every wish. But she ought to have been constantly by his side, for her advice, or rather injunctions, were over-ruled the moment he was placed in relation with those who opposed her views. His appearance was what might have been called respectable, yet his manners did not command respect. There was too much of the *bonhommie* of the private gentleman about him for a King of France. Those around him forgot, in the simplicity of his habits, that he was a monarch. Hence, during the progress of the Revolution, his very domestics ceased to treat him or consider him as a King. Once, when signing an order for Baron de Benseval, Governor of Paris, one of his valets had the impertinence to look over his shoulder, to see what he was writing. The King, justly indignant at conduct so insolent, seized a pair of tongs, and would have knocked the fellow down, but for the Baron's interference. The scoundrel

left the room, in fits of laughter. In fact, long before his fall, he had become a cypher in his palace, and a by-word of fickleness and indecision in the land.

Had he possessed firmness and determination, although he could not, in all likelihood, have prevented the spread of revolutionary doctrines, or ultimately have checked the spirit of reform that was widely diffused over the country, yet, had he had recourse to arms when first threatened by his subjects, he might possibly have prolonged his reign, more especially if he had yielded to the first demands and expectations of the nation, after having crushed the unruly rabble, who endeavoured to overthrow his power. In such a perilous juncture, he should have adopted the maxim of Tacitus:—"Justum est bellum, quibus necessarium; et via arma, quibus, nisi in armes, opes est nulla."

But this ill-fated Prince dreaded both his nobility and the people; and when the latter demanded a relief from the taxation under which they groaned, he replied, that he would sanction an equality of taxation, whenever the clergy and the nobility should be willing to renounce their pecuniary privileges. He might as well have

told a bare-footed mob that they should wear shoes whenever their bishops thought proper to put down their equipages. Thus, to indulge the Comte d'Artois and a handful of perfumed minions around him, he dared and insulted armed millions, determined to assert their just rights, or perish in the attempt.

The Queen, although a woman whom nature seemed to have created for sovereignty, whose every look commanded admiration and respect, had fallen into a similar error, when, by her habits, she divested the crown of that prestige of royalty calculated to dazzle the people, more especially the French. Fond of a select society, she sacrificed to enjoy it the splendour and etiquette of Court. Entirely taken up with those persons whose conversation she preferred, she paid no attention to less favoured courtiers, and thereby offended their pride and vanity. She exchanged the gorgeous halls of Versailles for the snug retreat, and the luxurious boudoir of the *Petit Trianon.* One of her beauteous smiles would have won the hearts of all; whereas a look of hauteur or a nod of recognition, created her enemies at every levee and drawing-room.

The Duchess de Polignac, belonging to a family devoted to the crown, was her chief favourite. She was a sensible and amiable woman. It would, perhaps, have been fortunate for Marie Antoinette, had she more frequently followed her good advice. She was not wanting in natural abilities, but they had not been cultivated. A few novels constituted her chief reading; she disliked any serious conversation, but enjoyed all the idle chit-chat of the day; nor, in this frivolous course of life was she offended at any *double entendre*, although not altogether gauzed. This, perhaps, is one of the reasons that led her enemies to doubt her morality, and accuse her of many acts of depravity, which, in reality, were mere oversights of prudence. It may naturally be inferred from such a character, that she had no great susceptibility of lasting friendship, and was incapable of stability. Open to adulation the most fulsome, her vanity led her into many fatal errors. Such, for instance, was her blind partiality to the wretched minister, de Brienne, which simply arose from the vain glory of having herself raised him to the elevated station he so disastrously filled. The cunning and ambitious prelate availed himself of this

weakness, to assume such an empire over her, that he shared in the general odium in which she was held. Even after his fall, she added to the public dissatisfaction, by procuring him a Cardinal's hat, and promoting most of the members of his family.*

* The unpopularity of Brienne is somewhat unaccountable, for he not only had been a reformer of many vicious establishments in the church, but a friend of d'Alembert and other philosophers of the day. Abbé Baruel, in his absurd work on Jacobinism, calls him an "Hypocrite Scélérat," or a "Monstrueux Prélat," and his wise regulations for religious houses of both sexes, this fanatic Jesuit says, "caused the good monks to shed tears of blood." On the other hand, he was accused of having wished to give to monasteries an aristocratic influence, as a certificate of nobility was required for admission. Thus this vain minister, who endeavoured to make the monastic orders subservient to the Crown, was accused of having entertained impious and Jacobinical views. One might have imagined that the patronage of Marie Antoinette, was quite sufficient to exonerate him from such a charge. Yet Baruel, the advocate of the *faithful* clergy of his time, says of him, "Il fallait toute l'ambition de Brienne, il fallait toute la scélératesse et tout le judaisme de son âme pour se faire Archevêque de Paris, il se serait fait Pape, pour trahir Jésus Christ et son Eglise." Poor France, with all her crimes, with all her miseries, what would have been her fate, if the Royalists had triumphed, the foreigners devastated her territory, and the people, bound hand and foot, been given up to the tender mercies of the Jesuits and emigrants!

While she thus exposed herself to the hostility of courtiers out of favour, and to that of the people, she made numerous enemies amongst the women of the Court. She could not suffer the presence of pretty women, without evident marks of discontent, although she constantly collected them around her, and, when she most probably expected to outshine them by her attractions, she experienced the mortification of seeing them triumph over her. She was accused of dissimulation. No charge could have been more unfounded, for she never could well disguise her feelings or belie her high blood. Proud, haughty, and courageous, she would have headed the armies in the field, had she been born a reigning princess; but, in the distracted state of her husband's councils, all her energies were lost, and personal danger, as well as the dread of forfeiting her high position in the world, often induced her, however reluctantly and painfully, to make concessions to the clamourous rabble, that frequently threatened her life.

The mutual attachment that existed between the Queen and the Comte d'Artois, which led to many malignant surmises and conjectures, did them both an infinity of mischief. He was

considered as the head of the profligate and insolent young nobility that thronged around the Palace, and who, in moments of thoughtless dissipation, and under the influence of wine, would often insult the people with impunity, and the *mousquetaires gris et noirs* of the Royal Guards were held in utter detestation.

The dislike entertained towards *l'Autrichienne*, as she was called, was fully exhibited when the unfortunate Princess was executed. The populace heaped every possible insult on her, and a general indifference prevailed in the capital. No doubt the cruel treatment, the refined barbarity which she had experienced, excited the indignation of every well-disposed person, who pitied her more as a wretched mother torn from her children, than as a fallen Queen; but, when it was recollected that her intrigues, had they been successful, would have covered the land with bloodshed and desolation, the bitter tears she shed in her proud agonies, were considered as dew-drops when compared to those that would have flowed from the eyes of thousands of widows and orphans had her plans been brought to maturity, and foreign hordes decimated the people.

In her last moments, she displayed a blind devotion to the bigotry of the Court, and preferred to die without spiritual comfort, rather than accept the services of priests, whose only crime had been to swear allegiance to their country, its laws, and her ill-fated husband, and who had remained to watch over their distracted flock, instead of kindling a civil war in every direction where these incendiary denunciations were heeded.

Thus, in the hour of need, the royal family found themselves abandoned by their army and by the people, and could only repose confidence in a few trusty, but rash and insolent guards, and some Swiss mercenaries, who bravely perished in their defence—one might say ingloriously, since no advantage was derived from their noble fidelity. Recent events have proved that the race of Bourbons was rendered, by the gradual corruption of age, unfit to govern, and all who advocated their cause, and sought to uphold their power, shared their misfortune, and sunk in public estimation. Striking examples of the perils incurred, when fidelity to a sovereign is contrary to the interests of our country and the general welfare of society.

CHAPTER VII.

A famine—The maximum—The Marquis de Langle—My father denounced as an *accapareur*—Depreciation of paper currency—Purchase of National property—My brother imprisoned—My father and mother exiled from Paris—The Brother Albittes—Madame de Caux—The Scotch college converted into a prison—A faithful dog—Ferocity of Henriot—Mademoiselle de Béranger—Daily executions—The guillotine—Sanson, the executioner—Collot d'Herbois again—Domiciliary visits—Law of the *suspects*—Camille Desmoulin's ironical speech on the subject—Singular pastimes of the prisoners—Lapagne—My uncle and cousin guillotined with Madame du Barry—My Father arrested—His life endangered by an incautious letter of mine—Generous behaviour of an Irish interpreter—The rights of man—English prisoners in the Scotch College, and their fair neighbours confined in the adjoining building, the Dames Anglaises—Rosé; the jailor—*Moutons*, or informers placed in the prisons.

THE reign of universal terror had now commenced. Danger threatened the country in every direction, and civil war breaking out in several provinces, added to the apprehension of the foreign legions that menaced revolutionary France. To increase these embarrasments, provisions of

every description had become scarce. Monopolists hoarded their goods, and would only sell them at a higher rate than the established *maximum*. The Convention, therefore, decreed, that any person who kept more than one month's provision in his house, should be considered an *accapareur*, and punished accordingly, while it was considered criminal to refuse the *assignats* or paper currency *at par*. Bread and meat were issued to the people according to the number of the members of a family, and to receive these limited rations, the inhabitants of Paris were obliged to form at the doors of the bakers and butchers, what was called *une queue*, or tail. A cord was attached to the shop window, and was held by the anxious and hungry applicants, who were formed in a string, two-and-two. Sometimes a mischievous or turbulent person would cut the string, and then the clamorous mob would rush forward in numbers, until an armed force compelled them again to form regular ranks, two deep, and many persons, to obtain an early supply, remained all night on their posts.

It was during this dearth of provisions, that my father, and perhaps all of us, were well nigh suffering the rigour of the sanguinary edicts of the day. A certain Marquis de Langle, an ex-noble, who was the author of a "Voyage to Spain," and of an

infamous book, a publication erroneously attributed to Laclos, proposed to my father the sale of several bags of rice, an article that was daily becoming scarce, provided he would advance a certain sum. As the offer was what might have been considered a bargain, he imprudently accepted it, and placed in his hands the stipulated amount. But no rice appeared—days and weeks elapsed—until one day my father met this *ex-noble* in the street, and publicly brought him to account for his dishonesty. He excused himself in the best manner he could on various pretences, and promised that that very night part of the rice should be sent. On this occasion he kept his word, and towards midnight three or four sacks were clandestinely brought to our house, and concealed in a store-room.

However, the following morning, our neighbour, the fruiterer, hastened to inform us that this scoundrel had denounced us to the *Comité Révolutionaire* of the Section, and he advised us to lose no time in distributing this rice among our poorer neighbours. This recommendation my father very reluctantly followed, and we had scarcely shared the provision, chiefly with the fruiterer and the German-breeches maker's family, when the Commissaries of the Section, with a

guard of pikemen, arrived to make a *visite domiciliaire*, when all our neighbours interfered, vouching for the *civisme* of our family, and the Marquis himself was denounced as a secret agent of Pitt and Cobourg. We heard sometime after of his being apprehended, on a similar accusation, and I believe he was eventually guillotined, although he pleaded, in his defence, that he had been a secret agent of the Commune or Municipality of Paris.

The depreciation of paper, was, at this period, attributed to the schemes of Pitt, to ruin France by depriving her of the means of defending herself. No doubt paper was frequently exchanged for effects upon London, as also on Hamburgh, Amsterdam, and other commercial cities, while wiser people, as the depreciation increased, bought national property of considerable value with their *assignats*, and became proprietors of large estates. My father, strange to say, had purchased gold in bars, which he thought the most profitable and safe exchange, as it was a property easily concealed or removed, although constantly urged to buy houses, and amongst others, I recollect the *Hôtel de Créqui*, in the *Faubourg St. Honoré*, was offered to him for a few hundred pounds in specie. So valuable was the concern, that

the Albittes,* two Jacobin deputies, who lived in the same house with us, purchased the Hôtel, and the mere sale of the looking-glasses, &c., when cash payments were resumed, defrayed the original cost. It may appear extraordinary, but my father had always the greatest repugnance to possess houses or landed property, and was constantly engaged in hazardous speculations and bubble projects, which ultimately reduced him

* Albitte was accused of being one of the ferocious executioners of the Jacobin party at Lyons. He certainly was sent there, but was superseded by Collot d'Herbois and Fouché, for being too dilatory and merciful in the destruction of that ill-fated city. It has been endeavoured to exonerate Couthon from the atrocious proceedings. But Couthon, although he affected leniency, was a most blood-thirsty hypocrite, and lacked the determination to commit the crimes to which he excited more daring demagogues. At the same time Albitte did him the justice to admit, that his temporising in obeying the sanguinary orders he received, allowed a great number of persons compromised in the revolt to effect their escape. Both the Albittes, whom I daily saw when they were in Paris, always mentioned the event of Lyons with deep concern, and whenever they spoke of Fouché, the colleague of the ferocious Collot d'Herbois, and who had been a priest, they always mentioned his name with the most sovereign contempt, as a wretch who combined cruelty with avarice, thirsty alike for blood and gold. According to them, it was he who stimulated the ferocity of the revolutionary army, and who disposed of and appropriated the confiscated property of the inhabitants. The massacre of Toulon was also confided to Fouché, who again complained of Albitte's want of energy.

to the most exiguous circumstances. It was under this impression, that he frequently attended auctions, and purchased most extraordinary and useless articles, merely because they were cheap, and full well do I remember his once sending home a piece of striped velvet waistcoating out of fashion for nearly a century, and which he wanted us to wear. On another occasion, he bought several sets of buttons, with views of Paris, and little objects of natural history, under glass, which he wore himself, to the amazement of every one, when my brother and I rebelled, and refused what he considered a very handsome present.

Alas! this was only the beginning of our misfortunes and tribulations. To increase the horrors of famine, the English Government had blockaded the ports of France, and confiscated every neutral vessel that was laden with provisions for its relief. This very questionable proceeding, in which the sufferings of a people were increased, to oppose their Government, excited general indignation; and the Convention decreed that every English person in France, from the ages of twelve to sixty, should be imprisoned until peace. Not long after, an order was sent to the armies not to give quarter to any English soldier; and another decree enacted that every foreigner taken on board an English vessel should be considered a pirate, and hung up at the

yard-arm as such. Our Government threatened retaliation, and the atrocious edict was never put into execution.

In consequence of this law, my brother James was arrested during the night by members of the Section, who placed seals on all the papers which they found and collected in a secretaire. I was not of the age specified for imprisonment; besides, our neighbours, I verily believe, would have rescued me at any price. My father and mother were Dutch—*Citoyens Bataves*—and were exiled from Paris, taking up their residence at Sucy St. Légèr. However, this exile was of short duration; for our neighbours, the Albittes, urged by their sister, Madame de Caux, who was then a very lovely woman, obtained an order for their recall from the *Comité de salut public*, to whom they presented a memorial, signed by all our neighbours, who attested the *civisme* of the *citoyen Van Millingen*, and the constant kindness of the family to the *sans-culottes* of the Section. Our faithful Coté, no longer called a servant, but our *homme de confiance* had gone from door to door to obtain signatures, and I accompanied him, with a red cap on my head, in a blue *carmagnole*, and a *couteau de chasse* by my side.

My brother was first carried to the prison des

Madelonettes, but it was so crowded, that he was transferred, with other English *détenus*, to the Luxembourg, that palace having been converted into a prison. There we found many British subjects, amongst others General O'Hara, who had been taken at Toulon.

It did not enter into the views of the Jacobin Government to sacrifice any English prisoners, and as many persons accused of counter-revolutionary plots were in the Luxembourg, and were daily sent to the scaffold, for fear of mistakes (for in the indiscriminate system of terror that prevailed, it not unfrequently happened that mistakes took place, and many wrong victims were sent to the Tribunal Révolutionaire), the English were again transferred, and my brother, with many others, was sent to the College des Ecossais, Rue des Fossés St. Victor, near the Jardin des Plantes, and the female prisoners were confined in the Dames Anglaises, formerly an English convent, next door to the Scotch College.

At first all the prisoners were put on jail allowance, in honour of equality, but it was afterwards decided by the Commune, that those who could afford it should be supplied from some restaurateurs, or by their families. Of course, the last arrangement was made for my brother, and for upwards of

twelve months, accompanied by my faithful Coté, I carried him his dinner: no trifling distance from the Rue Neuve St. Roch.

These supplies were most carefully examined at the entrance, lest any letters or secret communication should take place, and the jailor or turnkeys not only cut into every pie or joint of meat, but actually examined fruit and vegetables. The most ingenious stratagems were resorted to, to elude this vigilance, some of them of fatal consequence to their devisers. At the Luxembourg, one of the prisoners corresponded with his disconsolate wife through a dog that always accompanied the servant that brought his food. One day the caresses of the animal were warmer than usual: he would not quit his master a moment: he barked and yelped, and rubbed his collar repeatedly against his hands and knees. His master, thinking it galled him, loosened it. A letter was pinned to the lining! The answer was transmitted by the same dumb messenger, who, while charged with the sacred trust, could not be approached;—he growled at the turnkeys, and would have torn to pieces any stranger who durst attempt to seize him. The poor creature was soon punished for his fidelity. The wretch Henriot, who had once been a seller of *contre-marques*, or cheques, at the theatre, and was one of the most merciless and ferocious Jacobins of

the day, ever glutted with blood and liquor, was then Commandant of Paris. One day on his inspectorial visits, he observed the suspicious appearance and conduct of the dear animal; and, sending for his master, accused him of aristocracy. "This cur, sir," he said, "has been taught by you to snarl and bark at Republicans, like the hounds that the perfidious English employed to hunt down their slaves; you have brought him to know the scent of a *Sans-Culottes*, and made him insult the sovereignty of the people." So saying, he drew his sabre: two of his brave staff followed his example, and, assisted by gendarmes, they attacked the unfortunate animal, which, after a desperate defence, fell weltering in its blood, his dying looks fixed upon his distracted master, who, restrained by three or four ruffians, was compelled to witness the sad fate of his faithful companion and friend. Struggling with the guard, he endeavoured in vain to assist him, and in his impotent rage, poured forth his just indignation on the assassins. The letter was found in the collar. He was immediately transferred to the Conciergerie, tried by the Tribunal Révolutionnaire, and beheaded. His wife was also arrested for having corresponded clandestinely with her husband, to whom she was so speedily to be united in death. How fondly then must they have hoped that brutes

(as they are called) possessed an immortal soul, that they might meet again, never more to part!

Alas! in these dismal times, those who lived were desirous to follow the objects of their affection. In the same prison was an amiable girl, of the name of Béranger. Her father, her mother, and her younger sister were arrested: somehow or other she was not included in the roll of death. She tore her hair in frantic agony, and clung to her parents, exclaiming, "Shall we not die together?" A gendarme brought a fresh act of accusation. She was on the list; joy beamed in every feature; and, looking over the paper with as much delight as if it had been an order for her liberation, she embraced her mother, saying, "Mother, dear mother, I now shall perish with you!" Contented, she cut off her own luxuriant hair, and strove to soothe the agony of her aged parents, as the cart of death slowly traversed the dense and atrocious populace of Paris, that rolled their angry waves around them, yelling like hyenas for their prey.

Every execution was attended by a gang of furies, in the shape of women, who were called *les aboyeuses*, and *les insulteuses* (the barkers, and the insulters), from their loud and opprobrious vociferations. They not only accompanied the tumbrils of death to the scaffold, but would often cling to their

wheels, while pouring forth the bitterest and the most obscene vollies of execration—spitting at the wretched victims, not being able to tear them to pieces in their demoniac rage; and it was more particularly young and beauteous martyrs that excited their malevolence. Each of these harpies received two francs a day.

Never can I forget the mournful appearance of these funereal processions to the place of execution. The march was opened by a detachment of mounted gendarmes—the carts followed; they were the same carts as those that are used in Paris for carrying wood; four boards were placed across them for seats, and on each board sat two, and sometimes three victims;—their hands were tied behind their backs, and the constant jolting of the cart made them nod their heads up and down, to the great amusement of the spectators. On the front of the cart stood Sanson, the executioner, or one of his sons or assistants; gendarmes on foot marched by the side; then followed a hackney-coach, in which was the *Rapporteur* and his clerk, whose duty it was to witness the execution, and then return to Fouquier Tinville, the *Accusateur Public*, to report the execution of what they called the law.

The process of execution was also a sad and heart-rending spectacle. In the middle of the

Place de la Révolution was erected a guillotine, in front of a colossal statue of Liberty, represented seated on a rock, a Phrygian cap on her head, a spear in her hand, the other reposing on a shield. On one side of the scaffold were drawn out a sufficient number of carts, with large baskets painted red, to receive the heads and bodies of the victims. Those bearing the condemned moved on slowly to the foot of the guillotine;—the culprits were led out in turn, and, if necessary, supported by two of the executioner's valets, as they were formerly called, but now denominated *éleves de l'Executeur des hautes œuvres de la justice** ; but their assistance was rarely required. Most of these unfortunates ascended the scaffold with a determined step—many of them looked up firmly on the menacing

* The functions of executioners, both in France and several other countries on the continent, are hereditary. Those wretched men bore the name of the town to which they belonged, and were called, M. de Paris — M. de Lyons — or M. de Bordeaux. They formerly wore a yellow uniform. An anecdote is related of the execution of Damiens, when all the *bourreaux* of France were summoned to attend, not only to add to the *éclat* of the ceremony, but to suggest some more refined torture. They were all grouped round the scaffold, when an English amateur strove to make his way through the crowd to obtain a better view of the exhibition; the French hangmen, with national politeness, made room for him, exclaiming:—"*Faites place à M. de Londres!*"

instrument of death, beholding for the last time the rays of the glorious sun, beaming on the polished axe; and I have seen some young men actually dance a few steps before they went up to be strapped to the perpendicular plane, which was then tilted to a horizontal plane in a moment, and ran on the grooves until the neck was secured and closed in by a moving board, when the head passed through what was called, in derision, *la lunette républicaine;* the weighty knife was then dropped with a heavy fall; and, with incredible dexterity and rapidity, two executioners tossed the body into the basket, while another threw the head after it. On many occasions, when a celebrated victim was despatched, Citizen Sanson would seize the head by the hair, and hold it out, streaming with gushing blood, to the delighted public, who, on those occasions, would rend the air with the cries of *Vive la République!* while the gendarmes flourished their bright sabres. In the case of Charlotte Corday, and some other noble personages, the executioner would slap both the cheeks of the victim, to the great delight of the *peuple souverain;* many of them dissatisfied with the shortness both of the *spectacle* and the actor's sufferings, and loudly demanding that Marat's ingenious proposals should be adopted—for this hideous monster, in the *Ami du Peuple,* of which

he was editor, urged the expediency of adding to the sufferings of the aristocrats, by pouring hot oil in their ears, putting out their eyes with red-hot irons, slitting their noses and tongues, tearing off their nails, &c. &c. It was this eloquence of blood that obtained him the appellations of the "Divine Marat," and the "Sacred Apostle of Liberty."

The execution over, the carts were drawn to the cemetery of the Madeleine, or the field of Clamart, and the remains of the decapitated cast into deep graves, containing quick lime, while the carriage of the Rapporteur, escorted by gendarmes, returned to report progress to the tribunal of blood. In the departments, the executions were considered a festivity; for instance, at Arras, the scaffold was erected before the theatre, and Le Bon, the Deputy, with his wife and his friends, were seated on a balcony to enjoy the sight, while a band of music was playing *Ah ça ira!* and *La Carmagnole!* The executioners afterwards went home to sup with the *Représentant du peuple*, and bets were made on the rapidity with which they could strike off heads, with as much avidity as similar wages could be laid on the speed of a racer. The Parisians were denied this entertainment. When executions became more numerous, the inhabitants of the Faubourg St. Antoine complained bitterly of the privation they experienced in not being able

to attend the service of the holy guillotine—*la sainte guillotine*, as it was called, without great difficulty, from the distance between the Place de la Révolution and their abodes, more particularly as their wives and children could not walk so far. This application was duly entertained by the considerate Commune, and executions took place alternately at the old spot and the Barrière du Trône; while criminals who were condemned for offences that were not of a political nature were beheaded on the old-fashioned Place de Grève; the scene of various executions in former days, so admirably delineated by Callot in his engraving called "Les Supplices."*

It is certain that the caterers of this kind of public amusement were much less ingenious in the metropolis than in the departments. Thus, at Nantes, Carrier displayed great ingenuity and skill in varying the entertainments. For instance,

* Notwithstanding the assertion that these executions produced a general gloom, and that shops and windows were shut in the streets through which the sad *cortège* passed, I can affirm that those exhibitions were festive entertainments for the people. The carts passed within three doors of our house, and I daily witnessed the fearful scene. Not only was the Rue St. Honoré crowded with spectators, but a mass of the populace followed the tumbrils, and I generally remarked that their shouts of savage glee were in proportion to the number of the condemned, or their former popularity.

one day he announced the *Republican marriages*, which were celebrated by stripping young boys and girls, then lashing them together face to face, and then turning them round in a most ingenious sort of waltz to national music, until they reached the river or the field of execution, where they were either cast into the Loire, or massacred by a detachment of the *armée Révolutionnaire*. On another day, priests were embarked in smacks, which put out to sea, and when they were at a certain distance, valves in the sides of the vessel were opened, and the boats were sunk; but as this scene was not sufficiently dramatic, boats with guards followed the wake of the ship, and whenever a priest appeared struggling with the waves, he became a target for ball practice. Collot d'Herbois, whom I have already mentioned, in gratifying his revenge on the inhabitants of Lyons who once hissed him, when a strolling player, showed a perfect knowledge of a grand melo-dramatic spectacle; and when the guillotine was not found sufficiently expeditious in despatching his victims, he had recourse to artillery, as grape-shot was much more effective than the axe. Then, again, when the houses of the aristocrats were demolished, the labour of masons was a slow process, and he directed the buildings to be mined and blown up. In his enthusiastic report of this

popular vengeance to the Convention, he expressed himself in a most eloquent manner. "The Lyonese," he wrote, "are conquered; but they still assert they will, some time or other, revenge themselves. It was, therefore, urgent to strike these rebels with terror, as well as those who might follow their example. The instrument of death did not act with sufficient celerity, and the pickaxe and mattock were too slow in demolition; therefore, grape-shot destroyed men, while mines destroyed buildings. All those who perished had imbrued their hands in the blood of patriots; and the popular commissioners, at one glance at the prisoners, selected those who should be smitten."

The ferocity of the Jacobins at Lyons was so ingenious, that, after the massacre in the prisons directed by Chalier, a monster who had been brought up to the church, the bodies of the victims were hung up on trees in the public walk, and their limbs linked together, to form what they called *une guirlande Républicaine.* This Chalier, during those first outbreaks, carried about a crucifix, which he spat upon and trampled under foot, after his orations to his followers. Yet this monster, when on the scaffold, kissed the image of the Saviour he had thus insulted, with apparent pious resignation and contrite repentance. The execu-

tion of this cannibal was most terrific. The knife of the guillotine was slowly lowered on his neck, seven or eight times, and his head, one may say, was severed by inches. There can be no doubt that Lyons, terrified by the atrocities of the Jacobins, after having been driven to arms, and openly to avow the cause of royalty, had exposed itself to a fearful vengeance; nor can we exactly blame the Republican party for having treated them as enemies; but the indiscriminate butchery of the guilty and the innocent, and the destruction of a city, whose commerce and industry was one of the principal props of the French revenue, were acts of such unparalelled barbarity and folly, that posterity will scarcely credit the terrific account of the sufferings, and the heroic fortitude of the population; for, amongst the victims were many staunch Republicans, who sang the Marseillaise, and the parting hymn of the Girondins, when brought out to be butchered.

The prisons in Paris were now encumbered with suspected persons. Nothing could equal the solemnity of the fearful nights. The stillness was only interrupted by the measured steps of the members of the Revolutionary Committees, and their armed myrmidons, here and there stopping at the door of a denounced family, and, after a heavy

rap of the ponderous knocker, that vibrated like a death-knell, pronouncing the fatal words,

"OUVREZ—AU NOM DE LA LOI!"

The trembling porter obeyed. The gates were thrown open. The party ascended the stairs with the same solemn step. All was silent, nothing was heard except the clanging of the sabres on the stairs, and the clashing of the pikestaves. The door of the accused was opened with the same fatal *sesame* of assassination, and the *mandat d'arrêt*, or warrant, was read, seals placed on every article of furniture that could contain papers, and the unfortunate prisoners were borne away to the Committee, amidst the tears and agonized entreaties for pity or compassion of wives and children, doomed, most probably, to behold them no more—since accusation and death were synonymous.

Such was the fate of the suspected; and few could hope to escape from this denunciation, which involved, 1st., All those who, in popular assemblies, checked the energies of the people by insidious discourses, turbulent expressions, or threats. 2nd. All those who, from motives of prudence, spoke mysteriously of the misfortunes of the Republic, appeared to pity the

people, and were always ready to circulate bad news, with an affectation of grief. 3rd. All those who had altered their conduct and their language according to events, and who, while silent on the crimes of Royalism and Federalism, expressed themselves emphatically on any trifling act of misconduct of patriots, and assumed, to pass for Republicans, a studied austerity and severity which was not equally observable when a Moderate or an Aristocrat was the subject of conversation. 4th. All those who should show compassion for farmers and avaricious traders, whom the law was obliged to punish. 5th. All those who had constantly on their lips the words of Liberty, Republic, and Country, and yet associated with ex-nobles, priests, counter-revolutionists, Aristocrats, and Moderates, or who appeared to take any interest in their fate. 6th. All those who had not taken an active part in anything that concerned the progress of the Revolution; and who, to exculpate themselves for this neglect, adduced their devotion to the country, or their services in the National Guard. 7th. All those who accepted the Republican constitution with indifference, or expressed any doubt or apprehension in respect to its duration. 8th. All those who, not having done anything against liberty, had done nothing for it. 9th. All those who neglected to assist the meetings

of their Sections, and gave as an excuse that they were not accustomed to public speaking, or that they had been prevented by their private affairs. 10th. All those who spoke without proper respect, or with contempt, of the constituted authorities, the symbols of the law, or of the defenders of liberty. 11th. All those who had signed counter-revolutionary petitions, or frequented anti-civic clubs or societies, &c. &c.

It was scarcely possible for any quiet citizen, or upright member of society, to escape from such a proscription. It was admirably described by Camille Desmoulins, one of the first and the most enthusiastic advocates of the Revolution, in a speech delivered at the Jacobin Club, where, in an allegorical description of Rome, he alluded to the miserable condition of France,—a sarcastic oration that sealed his fate, and soon after sent him to expiate on the scaffold his former rashness and tardy repentance.

"According to Tacitus," he said, "there once existed a law amongst the Romans, which specified the crimes of Lese Majesté and State offences. Expressions constituted a crime, and a man criminated himself by a single look—by grief —by compassion—by a sigh, and even by his silence. The city of Nursia was guilty of a counter-revolutionary offence, for having erected a

monument to its inhabitants who fell at the siege of Modena. Libonius Drusus committed a crime, when he asked a fortune-teller if he would not some day or other possess great riches. Cremutius Cordius, the journalist, was a criminal, for having called Brutus and Cassius, the basest of the Romans. One of the descendants of Cassius was a criminal, for having been found in possession of the portrait of his ancestor. Marcus Scaurus criminated himself, for having written in one of his tragedies a passage that could bear a doubtful construction. Petreius was a counter-revolutionist, for having dreamed of Claudius; Pomponius, for having given hospitality in his villa to a friend of Sejanus. The mother of Fusius Germinus was accused of having wept for her unhappy son. It was then a a State offence to grieve for a relation or a friend.

"When a citizen obtained popularity," he continued, "he might become a dangerous rival to the Prince, and excite civil war. *Studia civium in se verteret, et si multi idem audeant, bellum esse.*—SUSPECT.

"If a citizen avoided popularity, and remained by his fire-side; this retirement made him conspicuous—*Quantò metu occultior, tantò plus famâ adeptus.*—SUSPECT.

"Were you wealthy, you might bribe and cor-

rupt the people—*Auri vim atque opes Plauti principi infensas.*—SUSPECT.

"Were you poor, you must be narrowly watched: no one is more daring than the man who possesses nothing—*Syllam inopem, undè præcipuam audaciam.*—SUSPECT.

"Were you of a dull and sombre character, melancholy, or slovenly, it arises from your grief in beholding the prosperity of the country—*Hominem publicis bonis mœstum.*—SUSPECT."

The effects of this tyrannical enactment were soon obvious. Thousands were incarcerated on mere suspicion, and in every daily paper a numerical return of the prisoners was published for the gratification of the public. Thus, in a very short time, the people became so accustomed to executions and imprisonments, that both lost their horrors, and death and the privation of liberty were looked upon as the common lot of every one who bore a good name, or had any thing to lose.

In the prisons, executions were spoken of as a matter of course, and when an official came to bear away the victims selected for immolation, and the propitiation of the ferocious leaders of the day, a cordial farewell marked the separation, and each sought to comfort his departing companions by observing, "To-morrow will be my turn."

The guillotine became a toy; children played with models of the fearful instrument, and a little figure, whose head was fixed on with a bit of carrot or turnip, was decapitated as an amusement, with all the forms of an execution.

Jewellers imitated this destructive machine, and women and young girls wore golden and silver guillotines in pins, and brooches, and combs, even in ear-rings. One of the forfeits of social games, was to stretch a young girl on her face upon three chairs, so that her head and neck extended beyond the edge of the last seat, and a young man was to creep towards her on his back, and give her a kiss in that helpless position. In fact, the whole nation seemed to be intoxicated with blood, and I have no hesitation in affirming, from all that I then witnessed and heard, that the Royalist party, had they triumphed, would have displayed an equal refinement in ferocious re-action, and that the refractory clergy would have consulted the records of the Inquisition to devise ingenious torments.

Not only did death hold out no terrors to the prisoners, the grim foe was often trifled with, and the scaffold became the subject of a sort of dramatic entertainment. One prisoner performed the part of Dumas, the President of the Revolutionary Tribunal; another personated Fouquier Tinville, the public accuser. The jury sat on pallet-beds,

while the accused was placed on a table. The most absurd and fantastic plots were then denounced. One prisoner had seduced the wife of a Jacobin; another had stolen the breeches of a *sans-culotte;* a third had scalded the mouth of a Republican by giving him hot soup; a fourth had combed his hair and cleaned his teeth, which were considered aristocratic habits, and counter-revolutionary practices. The accused, after a defence equally ludicrous, was of course sentenced to death. A sham execution then took place. His hands were tied behind his back; a bench tilted on a table represented the board of the guillotine, when a blow of a knotted handkerchief struck off the head. After his supposed death, the sufferer wrapped himself up in a sheet, and, playing the ghost, he denounced, in a solemn tone of voice, the most awful retributive justice on his judges, and endeavoured to terrify such of his fellow-prisoners, as, not feeling disposed to join these mad freaks, had sought a few hours' repose on their sad couches, attempting to lull themselves into a temporary oblivion of all worldly ties of endearment.

One of these scenes was truly ludicrous. It was in the Conciergerie. A ruffian, called Lapagne, who had been Mayor of Ingouville, at Hâvre, as cowardly as he was cruel, had fallen asleep during one of these performances, and the prisoner who

played the ghost was a townsman, acquainted with all his atrocities. This wretch had once been a highway robber, and sentenced, in the *ancien régime*, to be broken on the wheel for a foul murder. A nobleman had obtained his pardon, and he requited the generous action by sending his benefactor to the scaffold. The supposed apparition now pulled him by the legs, and, standing before him, reproached him with his crimes in a sepulchral voice, and closed his denunciation by calling out, "Lapagne! Lapagne! Lapagne! arise and follow me to the infernal regions!" The miscreant, more dead than alive with terror, shaking from head to foot, with big drops of sweat trickling from his brow, rose with looks of horror, and followed the spectre towards the door, until roars of laughter convinced him of his error. Such were the amusements of many of the prisoners, who stepped out merrily to judgment and to death—rushing like a war horse on the hostile steel.

The case of the unfortunate Girondins, stern Republicans, who died the martyrs of their creed, will form one of the most interesting episodes of those disastrous times. In their enthusiastic rhapsodies, although several of them entertained hopes of acquittal from a consciousness of their innocence, they had inscribed upon the walls of their prison, some of them with their blood,

ancient and modern maxims of freedom, and glorious deaths in her cause. Such as "*Dulce et decorum per patriâ mori.*" "*Potius mori quam fœdari.*" When condemned, although beholding the bloody corpse of their dear friend and companion, Valazé, who had stabbed himself to deprive his enemies of the gratification of seeing him ascend the scaffold, they sang the *Marseillaise* in chorus; and when proceeding to execution, continued to chaunt the national hymn, with the defiance of Roland at Roncevaux, the first verse of which was as follows:—

"Entends tu le son de mon cor?
Je te défie à toute outrance,
M'entends tu, superbe Altamor?
Ce bras te donnera la mort.
Ou si je tombe sous ta lance,
Je m'écrirai fier de mon sort.
Mourir pour la patrie,
C'est le sort le plus beau, le plus digne d'envie!"

These lines were also sung by the victims slaughtered at Lyons, even while kneeling to receive the grape-shot that mowed them down!

The night before their execution, the Girondins ordered a splendid supper, and sat at their last repast until day-break, discussing the question of the soul's immortality! It was during this supper, that Vergniaud, in an eloquent speech, delivered his

prophecy of the destinies of France—"These people are too childish to wield its laws without injuring themselves. It will return to its Kings, as children return to their toys!"

The levity that was remarkable in the hall of the sittings of the dreadful tribunal, was also surprising. It was a compound of mock judicial solemnity and reckless indifference. In the centre of the hall, under a statue of justice, holding scales in one hand, and a sword in the other, with the book of laws by her side, sat Dumas, the president, with the other judges. Under them was seated the public accuser, Fouquier Tinville, and his scribes. Three coloured ostrich plumes waved over their turned up hats, *à la Henri IV*, and they wore a tri-coloured scarf. To the right were benches on which the accused were placed in several rows, and gendarmes, with carbines and fixed bayonets by their sides. To the left was the jury. In many instances the accused were allowed to defend themselves, but whenever it was apprehended that their defence might excite compassionate feelings amongst the auditors, they were thrown *hors des débats*, and judgment proceeded to without any further delay.

I little thought, when I first visited this hall of horrors, that some of my earliest friends and connexions would appear on the fatal benches.

I have already mentioned that, on our arrival in France, we were received by a relative of my mother, a Dutch banker, of the name of Van de Niver. He had been accused of negotiating paper, both on Amsterdam and London, and when Anacharsis Clootz was denounced to the Jacobins, and expelled from the club on the motion of Robespierre, one of the charges against him was, his having associated with my uncle and cousins, who had corresponded with emigrants and sent them money, but more especially with Madame Dubarry. This wretched woman had buried some diamonds and other valuables in the garden of her country-house at Luciennes, and had the temerity to come over for these articles. No one was acquainted with the circumstance but a negro slave, whom she had emancipated, and who, purposely or not, confided the secret to an Irish gardener, on whom, in more fortunate days, she had heaped obligations. This ruffian denounced her. She was taken up and conveyed to Paris. Van de Niver and his two sons were also thrown into prison, and in a few days they were all condemned to death. The trial was short — for proofs of their correspondence were evident. But the public accuser was delighted with the opportunity of casting every possible obloquy on the unfortunate royal favourite, and he was most

eloquent in attributing to her and other courtezans, all the horrors of the Bastille, the iniquity of the *Lettres de Cachet*, and the misery of the people; in fact, he described the unhappy creature, who was supplicating for mercy in an agony of despair, as a monster of corruption and profligacy. Shouts of applause greeted her condemnation. My poor uncle and cousins displayed a stoic indifference. It was only at the foot of the scaffold that the old man's courage failed; and he begged, as a favour, that he might be beheaded before his sons, as he feared the sight of their execution might shake his fortitude. The executioner stated the request to the *Rapporteur*, who, instead of acceding to it, ironically directed, that to spare the poor man's feelings, he should be led under the scaffold, that the blood of his sons might trickle over his guilty head. It was done—his two sons fell—he was then borne on the scaffold, when Sanson, the executioner, showed him both their streaming heads, which he held by the hair, and he was further doomed to witness the decapitation of of Du Barry, who was rending the air with her cries for help and mercy.* When her once lovely

* It is singular that Du Barry and Camille Desmoulins were, perhaps, the only victims of those terriffic days, who, to the last moment, seemed to entertain hopes of being saved, and were loud in their appeals to the multitude, little thinking

head was held out to the people, their applause was most tumultuous, and the executioner kept up the excitement, by displaying the bloody trophy on the four sides of the scaffold, that no portion of the people should be deprived of the exhibition.

An unguarded letter of mine, was nigh dooming my father and brother to a similar fate. It may be recollected that, after the events of the 10th of August, my mother, terrified at all that took place around us, supplicated my father to allow her and her children to return to England. We went as far as Calais, when pecuniary circumstances prevented my father from meeting her wishes, and we returned to Paris. When we left the capital, Van de Niver had placed in our hands a parcel of papers addressed to Madame du Barry, requesting us to conceal them, and carry them over. An opportunity offered. The papers were sent, and I had the imprudence to write to my father to tell Van de Niver that these important papers had been transmitted by a safe conveyance. I had, of course, completely forgotten the circumstances. However, two nights after the execution of Van de

that their attachment to life added to the exultation of the people, and their gratification in witnessing sufferings more acute than usual.

Niver, the awful knock of a domiciliary visit struck our door. We all arose. The officers of the Section entered, and arrested my poor father. Never shall I forget his stoical indifference and *sang froid.* My distracted mother wanted him to take a parcel of clothes and linen with him. He quietly put on two shirts, two pairs of drawers, and two pairs of stockings; then, putting a red night-cap in his pocket, he calmly said, "This is enough to last me till I'm executed!"

I accompanied my father to the police office of the sanguinary Commune, but was soon obliged to leave him, as he was transferred to the Luxembourg. I immediately sought our neighbours the Albittes; the eldest was on a mission. The youngest, Dorival, yielded to my entreaties and the prayer of his sister, Madame de Caux, and repaired to the *Comité de Salut Public.*

Their reply was alarming. They could only decide after the examination of the papers found in my father's possession, and these, being in English, had been handed over to the interpreter of the Committee. He was an Irishman—how I do lament that his name has escaped my memory! I hastened to him with Abbé Servois; we were bearers of a letter from Dorival Albitte, and another that his sister had procured from Barrère.

The interpreter was an ill-looking man, gruff and rude in his manner. He was surrounded with shelves, on which were placed *cartons* containing the different documents that needed translation. There was a *carton* on the table; it was labelled, *Affaires de la Du Barry et ses complices.* Several letters were before him.

He received us in a most distant and repulsive manner; but, after having perused our notes of introduction, he calmly drew out my unfortunate letter to my father, and, handing it to Servois, merely said,—*lisez !*

The pallor of Servois's countenance, his anxious and disconcerted looks, evidently expressed the greatest alarm. The interpreter did not seem to notice it, but, addressing himself to me in English, asked me many questions concerning my family, and then, turning round to my worthy preceptor, he took the letter out of his hands, and replaced it, with other papers, in the *carton.* Servois observed that the letter was written by a mere child; to which the interpreter sternly replied, "This is no child's play." So saying, he got up on a stool, and placed the *carton* on the top of a lofty shelf, and adding, "Many things may turn up before these papers are examined again," he quietly dismissed us, with the singular injunction to Servois, "Instead of teaching this lad Latin and Greek,

teach him "*Les Droits de l'homme*,"—a sort of prophetic advice.

Two days after, the *Comité de Salut public* ordered the liberation of my father. Servois had purchased a copy of *Les Droits de l'homme, et du Citoyen*, in the form of a popular catechism, which he made me learn by heart, and repeat to him every evening. Strange to say, an officer from the *Comité Révolutionnaire* called upon us to withdraw a *carte de civisme*, which my father had received, and replaced it with a *carte de sureté*, in which he was ordered to present himself to the Section twice in every *décade*. He then proceeded to inquire if I attended the *écoles primaires* with the children of the patriots of the Section, and examined me as to my knowledge of *les Droits de l'homme*. On being satisfied on that head, he took his leave, recommending me to attend regularly the debates of the *Société Populaire;* but, previously to his departure, he questioned my father regarding the company he kept, and entered the names of our usual visitors in a memorandum-book. My father was prudent enough to mention such of our acquaintances as were well known for their *civisme*, and amongst them were Grégoire, Royer, the two Albittes, and Serres, the Deputy. Strange, inquisitorial inquiry, that showed the extent of the

political ramification of the times. After his departure, we found that this man was Héron, an agent of the *Comité de Sureté Générale*, and the confidential informer of Robespierre.

My brother was very comfortable in the College des Ecossais. Its former superior, Abbé Inez, was detained in his own apartments, in which was suspended a curious panel painting of Mary Queen of Scots; and he also showed a little relic case of that ill-fated Princess in a walnut-shell, ornamented with curious workmanship. There were many English *deténus* in the prison, who, formed in different *coteries*, took their meals together. My brother's circle consisted of Sir Robert Smith, of Beerchurch Hall, Essex, whose wife and daughter, with his son, the present Sir Henry, often visited him;—a young medical student, a pupil of Desault, of the Hôtel Dieu, and subsequently of Gérard's and of the Veterinary School of Alford, of the name of Charles Este, the son of the well-known Parson Este, who was once the editor of the "World," and one of the most outrageous of English Jacobins;—a Scotch wine-merchant of the name of McGlashan;—a Major Magsey, and his nephew, Hugh Magsey, who was afterwards an officer in our service—the 16th Foot—and was married to a wealthy widow of the county of Cork, whose name, I believe, was

O'Donnel;—another Irishman, of the name of Hickson, a most extraordinary personage, who called himself a teacher of languages, and a poor creature who lived on the bounty of his fellow-prisoners, named Fidler. The days were spent in card or ball-playing, or playing at fives in the garden; and the prisoners clubbed the dinners sent to them by their friends, or ordered from a neighbouring *traiteur*. Indeed, the time passed merrily enough—some of the young men amusing themselves in corresponding with ladies confined in the *Dames Anglaises*, the garden of which was separated from that of the College by a wall. This correspondence was carried on by balls, on the leather of which were written various effusions in prose and in verse, covered with an envelop, and an address on white kid. The answers were conveyed in a similar manner, and thrown over the enclosure. However, I never heard that this amatory correspondence led to any result.

Amongst other sources of amusement, Professor Hickson contributed to the general merriment by his merciless barbarisms in the English language. He was generally called Murphy, in consequence of his often saying, when withdrawing to rest earlier than his companions, that he was going to seek repose in the arms of *Murphy!* It appeared that the poor man was much embarrassed when he was ar-

rested, and, after his liberation, many of his creditors pestered him for payment, and presented their accounts, when he invariably pretended to know nothing about them, exclaiming: "*Connais paw jamais viou.*" I had nearly forgotten another prisoner, an Irishman, and a great songster, named Mowett. He used to chaunt slang songs with great gusto, and "The night before Larry was stretched," and the "Christening of Salmon Joe," were among his gems.

The jailor, a man called Rosé, although of a forbidding appearance, and very rigid in obeying his instructions, was a kind and warm-hearted fellow, and when the prison was broken up, an ex-noble, I think of the name of Duhautoy, appointed him concierge to his château. The *Guichetiers*, or turnkeys, were also very civil, and did all in their power, with a little application of palm-oil, to contribute to the comfort of the prisoners, who were exempt from the horrors of frequent calls from the *Tribunal Révolutionnaire*. Very few of them were sent to execution; nor were there in the College any of those secret agents of the police, who passing, for prisoners, were actual spies and informers, and who went by the name of *Moutons*, from the mild and insinuating manners which they affected, to worm themselves into the confidence of

the unguarded prisoners, who were deceived by their hypocritical gentleness.

The safety of the English imprisoned in Paris was a strange occurrence, and, as I shall shortly show, it was owing to their incarceration; for, otherwise, from the general hatred entertained towards them, not only by the masses of the people, but by the leaders of the Jacobins, who attributed every atrocity to Pitt's machinations and bribery, they most certainly would have been massacred during the bloody convulsions that so frequently threatened general destruction. I have already stated that the most monstrous statements regarding the ferocity of the English were circulated, such as their sending for savages to devour the French prisoners, &c. &c. The very name of England seemed to excite a feeling of horror and of hate, and it may be truly said, that the French imbibed these hostile feelings from the very bosoms of their mothers.

CHAPTER VIII.

Amusements of the Parisians—The Poetry of the day—La Marseillaise—Le Chant du Départ—Veillons au salut de l'Empire—Hymn of the Bordelais and Versaillais—Song of La Montagne—Palais Egalité—Les Epaulettiers—Popular balls, or Bastringues—Sociétés populaire—Popular meeting of female Jacobins—Their *Présidente, Citoyenne Lacombe*—Their debates and speeches—David discovers that there was an Indian divinity called *Sans-culotte*—The inauguration of its image—New names substituted for those of the Saints—Complimentary days—Civic banquet—My father again endangered for sending an indifferent dinner to the banquet—The Quack Doctor, and Fofo, the pretty rope-dancer—*Mes premiers amours!*—Opiate Bordelais much used by the ladies of the ballet.

WHILE every popular assembly was excited by the eloquent discourses of the leaders, or *meneurs*, the aid of poetry and music was called in to kindle a similar enthusiasm in the theatres, the streets, and public gardens. Pont Neuf ballads, of the most

vulgar nature, and sublime specimens of patriotic inspirations, were heard in every direction. The *Carmagnole*, a favourite song, which was danced to in a *chaine patriotique* round the tree of liberty, or the guillotine, was a most doggrel composition. If I recollect well, the first verse was as follows:—

Monsieur Véto avait promis,
Monsieur Véto avait promis,
De faire égorger tout Paris,
De faire égorger tout Paris,
Mais son coup a manqué
Grace à nos cannoniers,
Dansons la Carmagnole.
Vive le son!
Vive le son!
Dansons la Carmagnole.
Vive le son
Du canon!

The words of the famous *Ah! ça ira* were equally trivial—

Ah! ça ira!
Les aristocrates à la lanterne
Ah! ça ira!
Les aristocrates on les pendra!

However, this blood-thirsty ballad was founded on the *Ah! ça ira* of the year 1790, which, strange to say, inculcated a maxim of the Gospel—

Ah ça ira ! ça ira ! ça ira,
Le peuple en ce jour sans cesse répète
Ah ça ira ! ça ira, ça ira,
Suivent la maxime de l'évangile
Du législateur tout s'accomplira,
Celui qui s'élève on abaissera
Celui qui s'abaisse on l'élevera
Ah ! ça ira ! ça ira ! ça ira !

But the hymn which inspired the greatest enthusiasm, was the celebrated *Marseillaise*. This fearful cantate was written by a young artillery officer, of the name of Rouget de Lisle. The soul-stirring effusion was poured forth in the enthusiasm of love, patriotism, and poverty—three mighty levers of human passions. De Lisle lodged in the house of an obsure citizen, named Dietrich, who had been raised to the dignity of the Mayor of Strasbourg. He loved his daughter, and, over a humble repast, he composed this glorious song, which, even to the present day, despite the crimes and the desolation which it ushered in its triumphant career, excites a glow of enthusiastic love of country, when we reflect, that at that period it became a march to death and glory. France had been doomed to destruction by the foreigner, and destruction threatened every hearth. It has been asserted that the Marseillaise was a spontaneous production—a national inspira-

tion in a moment of ecstatic exultation. Little did the enthusiastic youth foresee that the father of his beloved was to be one of the earliest victims of popular frenzy, and that he himself would be banished from his country, and, on his venturing to return, cast into prison, and only saved by the events of the 9th Thermidor.

The *Chant du Départ* was another glorious composition, and sung by the volunteers leaving their homes to meet the advancing enemies. The music, by Méhul, was in keeping with the exaltation of the poetry. When the Parisian contingents were marching, they filed across the stage of the Opera amidst thunders of frantic applause, while all the performers were pouring forth the soul-stirring strains. The first verse ran thus:—

La victoire en chantant vous ouvre la barrière,
La liberté guide vos pas ;
Et du nord au midi, la trompette guerrière,
A sonné l'heure des combats !
Tremblez, ennemis de la France,
Rois ivres de sang et d'orgueil,
Le peuple souverain s'avance.
Tyrans, descendez au cerceuil !
La République vous appelle
Sachez vaincre ! ou sachez mourir !
Un Français doit vivre pour elle,
Pour elle un Français doit périr.

The second stanza was sung by the supposed mothers of the departing youth.

De nos yeux maternels, ne craignez pas les larmes,
Loin de nous, de lâches douleurs ;
Nous devons triompher, quand vous prenez les armes.
C'est aux Rois à verser des pleurs !
Nous vous avons donné la vie.
Guerriers elle n'est plus à vous
Tous vos jours sont à votre patrie,
Elle est votre mère avant nous !
La République vous appelle, etc., etc.

Stanzas were also sung by fathers and sisters. It would be impossible to describe the enthusiasm excited by this performance !

Veillons au salut de l'Empire, was another National anthem sung at all the theatres, to the popular tune of "*vous qui d'amoureuses aventures,*" &c., in the opera of *Renault d'Aste.* The following verse, which I recollect, will give an idea of this song :—

Veillons au salut de l'Empire,
Veillons au maintien de nos droits,
Si l'aristocratie conspire
Conspirons la perte des Rois,
Liberté ! Liberté !
Que tout mortel te rende hommage !
Tyrans, tremblez, vous allez expier vos forfaits ;
Plutôt la mort, que l'esclavage,
C'est la devise des Français.

These songs, or rather hymns, became popular throughout the entire country, while different towns and Departments had their own local chaunts. Thus, the Bordelais had a quick march, with the following words:—

On dit par tout le monde,
L'Hymne des Marseillais,
Que l'on chante à la ronde
Celui des Bordelais.
Pour aller à la guerre,
La leur à des attraits;
Mais la notre, aussi fière
Annonce un Bordelais.

This last line was most characteristic of the gasconading style of the inhabitants of that versatile city. There was also a hymn of the *Bretons*, which I now forget, but it expressed an old saying of that head-strong, dogged race, *un Breton marche vingt-cinq pas, devant le bon Dieu!*

Even the inhabitants of Versailles had their anthem, of which I recollect the first inflated stanza.

Quels accents! quel transports!
Partout la gaieté brille.
La France, n'est elle donc qu'une seule famille.
Aux lieux même ou les Rois étalaient leur fierté,
On célébre la liberté!

Est-ce une illusion! suis-je au siècle de Rhée?
J'entends partout chanter d'une voix assurée!
Nous ne reconnaissons, en respectant les lois
Que l'amour des vertus, et la haine des Rois.

During the successful reign of the Montagne, a song was written in their praise, which, from its character, is worth preserving; and, though so many years have elapsed since I was in the habit of singing it, I believe I can give it with tolerable correctness.

1.

Heureux habitans des montagnes!
Chez vous règne la liberté!
En tous temps elle eût pour compagne,
L'innocence et la vérité!
Ici le soleil sans nuages
Chaque jour frappe vos regards
A vos pieds vous voyez les orages
Et restez toujours montagnards!

2.

Ce fût sur la montagne antique!
Que naquît l'homme libre et fier;
C'est sur la montagne Helvétique
Que Tell pulverisa Guesler!
Que dans la plaine les esclaves
Rampent aux genoux des Césars,
Pour vous, sans maîtres, sans entrâves,
Vous restez toujours montagnards.

3.

Londres, Berlin, Vienne et l'Espagne,
Prétendaient nous remettre aux fers
Mais du sommet de la montagne,
Un Dieu veillait sur l'Univers.
Par sa fermeté, sa prudence.
Malgré leur batallions épars,
La montagne a sauvé la France,
Gloire éternelle aux montagnards !

The *Sainte Guillotine* had also her hymns and her anthems, and in the Place de la Révolution were booths and exhibitions of all kinds, with rope-dancing, and puppet-shows, where *Polichinelle* cut off the head of an aristocrat, amidst shouts of laughter.

I have already mentioned that every effort was made, during that fearful period, to demoralize the country. Immoral books were circulated at the most trifling price, and the galleries of the Palais Royal, then Palais de l'Egalité, were crowded every night by a dense mass of abandoned women and ruffians; amongst the latter, the soldiers of the *Armée Révolutionnaire* were the most conspicuous, from the brutality of their manners, and the coarseness of their language. They wore large worsted epaulettes, and bore the name of *Epauletiers*.

Balls were open in every direction, and even at the windows of a third or fourth floor would be

suspended an oiled paper lanthorn, with the word '*Bal;*' the police distributing free admissions to these receptacles of corruption, and, not unfrequently, orders for refreshment, gratis. Such was the rabble here congregated, that over the doors of some of them was inscribed,

"*Une mise décente est de rigeur, et les citoyennes sont invitées à laisser leur sabots à la porte.*"

In these dens you witnessed nothing but unblushing obscenity, and every outrage on common decency. Of course these orgies often led to bloodshed. Most of the abandoned women who frequented them had their fancy men, whom they called *mon homme*, and as the fellows were, in general, good-looking ruffians, they not unfrequently became objects of jealousy, which led to a meeting with the infantry sword, or *briquet*, in the infantry, and the curved sabre, or *bancal*, in the cavalry. Civilians, or *Pékins*, mostly settled their differences by the *savatte*—a sort of pugilistic combat, in which each party endeavours to trip up and kick the other; or the double stick—*le bâton à deux bouts*, with which many of them were most dexterous. It is somewhat remarkable, that a great number of the favourites of the ladies were journeymen butchers, and, to the present

day, these gentlemen are celebrated in Paris for their *bonnes fortunes* in that sphere of society. As to their other accomplishments, they were in the practice of giving a sound drubbing—what they, politely, termed *une rincée—une volée—une saboulade*—to their favourites, when they could not supply them with money, no matter how obtained or earned. This class, of both sexes, was known by a slang appellation, an expression that cannot be translated, but which conveys the idea of its bearers being the most barefaced and audacious vagabonds upon town.

In the fine season, these balls were transferred to the *Guinguettes* surrounding Paris, where the same indecency and contempt of all propriety prevailed, if possible, with a still more determined *abandon*, although, to the credit of the society of that period, the modern *cancan* had not been introduced. These assemblies were usually called *Bastringues*, and each set was announced by a rude chorus of the *cavaliers* :—

"Mesdemoiselles, voulez vous danser?
V'là le Bastringue, qui va commencer:"

the word *demoiselles* being, on such occasions, more *distingué* than the common epithet of *citoyennes*. The refreshments usually consisted of

beer, bad wine, and brandy, with *échaudés* and *brioches*; the ladies generally paying *chopine* for their partners, or giving them the *goutte*, or a glass of brandy, technically called *du sacré chien tout pur*. Such were the amusements of the lower classes. Their superiors frequented balls somewhat more *récherchés*, but equally *décoletés*; and *rouge et noir*, and *roulette*, were played in adjoining rooms. Here, scenes of violence and strife were also frequent; and each morning witnessed various meetings in the Bois de Boulogue, many of the duels taking place between fencing-masters, or *prevôts de salle d'armes*, who sought to display their skill in what they called *un coup de malin*, similar to the celebrated *coup de Jarnac*.

Such was the state of society amongst the patriots. The quiet and respectable members of the community rarely frequented public places, with the exception of the theatres, which constitute a pursuit *de première nécessité* for a Frenchman; but they met by stealth, and with cautious mystery, at each other's houses, where even a whisper on the state of public affairs became a matter of life or death.

The utmost frugality and simplicity were every where observable in private families. Plate had either been melted down into cash, or concealed;

and a person who would venture to display silver covers before a neighbour who fed with a wooden or a pewter spoon, was in danger of losing his head. The order of the day was, to support the poor with the property of the more wealthy; and Marat, the idol and oracle of the people, asserted, in his *Ami du Peuple*, that "when a man is in want of every thing, he has a right to take from another the superfluities which he enjoys; nay, more, if he hesitates in giving it up, he has a right to cut his throat, and devour his palpitating heart." He adds:—"Whatever offence he may commit, whatever outrage he may do against his fellows, he no more troubles the order of nature than a wolf does in devouring a lamb. Pity," he maintained, "was a fictitious and artificial sentiment; and if you never speak to a child of nature of goodness, meekness, and such puerilities, he will remain ignorant all his life, even of the name of mercy."

At this period, the clubs of the Jacobins and Cordeliers were crowded, and the popular assemblies of the sections filled the churches. A man's *civisme* was tested by his attendance on those meetings, and on the violence of his brawling discourses, which were sure to meet with tumultuous applause whenever they appealed to the violent and unruly passions of the audience, a great part of which

consisted of women, who, not to lose time, were knitting stockings or garters during the proceedings, and who were therefore, as I have already stated, called *les tricoteuses*. In this group of hateful hags, it was painful to observe many young women, who were equally enthusiastic in their patriotic fervour; and, as every man who attended these popular meetings received forty sous, or 1*s.* 8*d.*, it may easily be imagined that they were crowded with needy miscreants of the lowest description.

The female demagogues, who had taken such an active part in the ferocious excesses of the mob, soon claimed a share in power and legislative interference. Clubs of women were formed in various quarters. Their debates were terrific, yet amusing. One of their places of meeting was a vaulted charnel house, in the Cemetery of St. Eustache. The chair was often taken by a young girl of uncommon beauty, of the name of Rose Lacombe. She wore crimson trousers, a red cap, and a tri-coloured scarf, and personated Liberty. This enthusiastic creature had been on the stage, and was the daughter of an *ouvreuse*, or box-keeper, of Lyons. At one time her influence in Paris was amazing. Her beauty, her wild eloquence, her tears, subdued the most obdurate Jacobin, when she chose to serve an accused

favourite, and pleaded his cause; while, at the same time, her frantic language, and her fiery countenance would kindle the most implacable passions, when she denounced a victim to her infuriated companions. Many of the members were *Dames de la Halle,* market and fish-women, and the effluvia of the scaly politicians of the last class, even had they possessed the power of syrens, would have deterred any person of susceptible olfactory nerves from a long continuance in the offensive circle.

The following speech, taken down at one of these sittings, may give an idea both of their views and their eloquence,—

"Fellow Citizens," said one of them, "since the days of the famed Deborah, who succeded Moses and Joshua, until those of our noble sisters who have lately joined our Republican legions, every epoch has produced a female warrior. Behold Tomyris, Queen of the Massagetæ, defeating and exterminating the tyrant Cyrus; Marsilla, driving the Turks from Stalymena; Catherine Lisse, saving Amiens; Debarry, defending Lavente against the despot Henry III.; The Maid of Orleans, defeating the base ancestors of Pitt; Jeanne de Montfort, disputing the possession of Brittany; Margaret d'Anjou, commanding in twelve battles; the noble Grecian maiden of

Lemnos, who, armed with a sword and the shield of her father, drove the Turks into the sea, and killed with her own hand twenty janissaries! But, if our sex have shown valour in the field, what have we not displayed in generosity and virtue! I shall not recall to your memory Cleopatra and Lucretia, Flora and Portia, Semiramide and Dido. You are all too well read in history, to need any mention of these heroines. Then look at the women of Aquileia, who made bow-strings with their hair; the Carthaginian ladies, who converted their flowing locks into rigging! But why have recourse to olden times? Look at our illustrious citizen and fishmonger of the Halle, the brave Reine André, who, heading a battalion of her sisters, marched upon Versailles, defeated the base *Gardes du Corps*, and brought the tyrant Capet back to Paris! Look at all our generous sisters, who knew nothing of gunpowder but fireworks, and yet dared the destructive cannon of the Bastille! Look, in short, at our lovely President, *Citoyenne Lacombe*, who, in the dress of an Amazon, fought on the glorious 10th of August, bled for the Republic, and conquered the satellites of the tyrant."

Some of the propositions and amendments of these desperate women were often most ridiculous. One evening, an old hag proposed that a levy

of thirty thousand women should be immediately decreed, to commence by a regiment of light infantry, composed of the girls of the town.

This strange proposition was vehemently opposed by a good-looking dame, who denounced the motion as an infringement of equality. "I have had the honour," she said, "of being ten years upon what is called the town, and I see no reason why any insulting distinction should be made between us and other women. Who are these *saintes ni touche** whom you call virtuous women? They are mere hypocrites, who consent to bend under the yoke of priestcraft. I long have burst from these ignoble trammels. I have given six sons to the Republic, and I shall endeavour to give it as many more. If they fall in the glorious cause of Liberty, I shall die satisfied, in the conviction that I have been more useful to my country than any of your prudish, morose *dévotes* and old maids. These are not times for idle words, but action; our youths are marching against the satellites of tyranny, and, as they fall in the noble struggle, it is our duty to fill up the vacancies. Let, therefore, every young man, ere he joins the army, leave with the object of his affection, a pledge both of love

* This term is applied to prudes who affect a mock modesty.

and patriotism. Let sterility be considered a crime of Lesé-Nationality — a sterile woman is only fit to be the house-keeper of a priest. Let a reward be granted to every woman who brings to the altar of Liberty the greatest number of young Republicans while the generous youth of France is arrayed on our frontiers. Let the direction of religion and education be confided to us. Women have directed and saved kingdoms, and why should we women dread to save a Republic? Catherine of Russia terminated the great labours commenced by Peter. The beautiful Ferronière governed the tyrants Francis I. and Henry II.; the hateful Catherine of Medicis swayed Charles IX.; Gabrielle led Henry IV.; Pompadour and Du Barry made puppets of kings and ministers. If such detestable wretches as those had power, why should not pure and virtuous Republicans, like ourselves, obtain the same influence in the councils of the State?"

Another member moved, as an amendment, "that every woman who, four months after the present debate, should declare herself pregnant, should receive a civic crown, and if she ultimately bore a son, her name should be registered in her Section, amongst the women who had deserved well of their country. She further proposed, that every married woman who, after eighteen months

marriage, had no child, should claim an unqualified right of divorce."

It may appear strange that these mental hallucinations were gravely entertained by the Convention, and every woman who presented two or three boys at their bar, was proclaimed as having *bien mérité de la patrie*, and invited to be present at their debates.

Shortly after, the influence and the turbulence of these ladies attained such a formidable ascendency, that both the Convention and the Commune were obliged to put down their meetings; suppressing, at the same time, clubs of children who were baptized with blood, and denominated *les enfants rouges*. In some instances, civic crowns were placed on the heads of public functionaries by these "*innocents*," as they were called, being considered emblems of purity. The abolition of these female clubs, which had ventured to trench on the functions of the Jacobins, was the work of Robespierre, who, while he was flattered by their fulsome adulations, dreaded the ridicule that might attach to such a preposterous association; while, at the same time, he feared their influence, as, in several instances, they had been the means of saving many persons doomed to the scaffold.

In the Jacobins, the most absurd speeches were

also frequent, and once a pupil of David presented the Society with a drawing, representing a naked savage, armed with a shield and darts, and exclaimed, "See this image, brother citizens, and let me inform you that my immortal master has discovered that the words *sans culottes* are of divine origin. Here is the representation of an Indian god, called *Camaltzeguis*, which, in their language, means without breeches. He is adored as the dispenser of safety and liberty, the exterminator of tyrants, and the protector of virtue. Let him, therefore, be our divinity." So saying, he knelt down before the drawing, and, rising with solemnity, proceeded to the altar of liberty, to deposit the precious idol, amidst a deafening chorus of the hymn, "Veillons au salut de l'Empire."

To a rational person, the country must have appeared to have been celebrating some bloody carnival;—running wild in the frantic pastimes of some ferocious Saturnalia. Every one sought to imitate some hero, or some sage of Greece or Rome. A cobbler would call himself Cincinnatus,—a nightman, Cato, and a common wench, Lucretia. In the calendar, the names of Saints were altered to the names of agricultural or mechanical implements or tools. Jerome was a spade, Gregory, a plough, Martin, a handsaw, and Matthew, a pitch-fork; and

fatal was any ill-timed joke on the subject. Two poor fellows were executed for having turned the almanac into ridicule, by giving themselves ridiculous names.

Every housekeeper was compelled, under terrific penalties, to hang up, or post on his door, a scroll, on which was represented a fasces, surmounted with the cap of liberty, with the words, "*Liberté! Egalité! Fraternité! ou la mort—Vive la République, une et indivisible, impérisable et éternelle.*"

On the last of the *jours complimentaires*, or *sans culotides*, or the five odd days after the decimal division of the year, all the people were obliged to dine together in the streets, at what they called *un banquet civique et fraternel.* The gutters in Paris run in the centre of the streets, and over them long tables were laid, to which every one brought his portion, according to his means. In this pic-nic, the choice of dishes became a dangerous affair. If you presented a luxurious article, you were called an aristocrat, who fed upon dainties, while the people were starving; and if, on the contrary, your contribution was humble, you were accused of being a monopolist, insulting the indigence of your neighbours. My poor father, I recollect, sent a leg of mutton, and some bacon and cabbage. Our neighbour, the German breeches-

maker, who had brought some *cervelas*, swore that, when we were at home, we could eat turkies and capons, and that we thought a tough leg of mutton good enough for the people, while cabbage and pork were a common meal amongst them. To appease him, my friend, the fruiterer, implored me to send for a basket of wine, and a bottle of brandy, which were brought by Coté, our *homme de confiance:* but, although the sight of the liquor seemed to cool the *culottier's* wrath, he swore that we insulted the sovereignty of the people by not allowing Coté to sit down to table with us. The poor fellow, with much hesitation, placed himself near me, and managed to get tolerably drunk, when he joined in the boisterous choruses of patriotic songs, to his heart's delight, and I was made to sing a verse of a chaunt, beginning—

> " Valeureux Francais, marchez, à ma voix
> Courez à la victoire.
> La liberté dans vos foyers
> Vous comblera de gloire !"

Never shall I forget the misery of my poor dear mother, (whose only consolation in her continual agonies was devotional exercises) when she beheld these detestable orgies, and was made to drink a bumper of wine, to the health of "*Les défenseurs de la patrie.*"

When the repast was over, and nothing left to eat and drink, the tables were cleared, and the guests began dancing on them: in many instances bringing them down, as they were chiefly formed of boards placed upon tressels, and here were seen footing it, both to voice and to discordant fiddles and flutes, ladies of high birth with draggle-tailed drabs, and young men of distinguished families hand in hand with the vilest vagabonds, constantly roaring out for liquor, which was amply supplied them by every one who could afford it, to put a more speedy end to the hateful amalgamation, they being compelled, in the meantime, to roar out, "*Vive la République! à bas les aristocrates!*" To this day, when I call to my recollection these strange scenes, they appear to me as a dream.

Some sort of love was often kindled in these promiscuous meetings, and I recollect I was smitten with a dear little girl, of the name of Alphonsine Le Roy, familiarly called *Fofo*. She was my *beau ideal* of feminine charms, despite her profession: for my pretty Fofo was rope-dancer to an Italian quack, who sold a sort of opiate, or *orvietan*, on a stage in the Place de la Révolution, very near the statue of Liberty, and of course of the Sainte Guillotine. This nymph was beautifully made, and appeared to great advantage when gracefully stepping up and down the tight rope; a flesh-coloured *tricot*

and *maillot*, and a purple gauze tunic, studded with spangles, being her only garments. Her mother was *gouvernante* to the quack, whose name, I think, was Albertini—the very type of the mother of a dancer—a species *sui generis*, who seem to have been cast by nature in the same mould. A short time after, Fofo got tired of her monotonous life, more especially as a part of her duties, when not dancing, was to assist in pounding and making up her master's preparations, of which Fofo had the secret, which she greatly valued ; and, one evening, she and her mamma wanted to persuade me to take them to England, where we should most undoubtedly make a fortune. If I recollect well, some of the ingredients of this nostrum were cinnamon, ginger, lytta, and honey of roses. Fofo was mighty fond of it, and not unfrequently made me partake of some of it on the sly, till I was half crazy. I have since found that Signor Albertini's compound was similar to the Venetian *Diabolini*. However, Fofo, some time after, was one of the most popular dancers at the Theâtre Molière. She still indulged in her opiate, and, strange to say, many years after, I found this preparation sold in Bordeaux, and in general use amongst *danseuses*, both in Paris and in London, and called *l'Opiate Bordelais*. The choreographic ladies maintain that nothing keeps up their strength

more efficaciously, or, to use their own expression, "*Rien ne ravigotte comme ça.*"

Fofo, at last, became a favourite of Barras, and one of the attractions of Grosbois, until the director handed her over to a wealthy *fournisseur*, who gave her splendid apartments in an hôtel in the Rue Richelieu, then Rue de la Loi, and I spent many a pleasant evening at her *petits soupers.*

CHAPTER IX.

Apostasy of the clergy, and its results—Anacharsis Clootz, and Chaumette—Gobel, the Bishop of Paris—Grégoire—The Goddess of Reason—Her worship—Catherine Théos, the "Mother of God"—A creature of Robespierre—Gerles—Ceremonies performed in her sanctuary—The creed of Ibrascha, a fanciful religion introduced in the prisons—The worship of a Supreme Being introduced by Robespierre—His speeches on the occasion—Pomp of the inauguration—Hymn à l'Etre Suprême.

THE fast-spreading state of utter demoralization, and the destruction of everything in the shape of public worship, or of religion of any kind, became so alarming, that many of the leaders of the day deemed it essential to introduce some sort of creed.

To re-establish the Roman Catholic religion, or any Christian rite, was out of the question. As I have already stated, many priests had publicly declared that they had been impostors, and that all the mysteries that they had taught as sacred articles

of faith, were mystifications and holy juggles, to deceive the people, and profit by their ignorance and credulity. These abjurations had been public. Bishops, and priests of various grades, had gone in procession to the Convention, and deposited at the bar not only their pontificals, their rich dresses, mitres and croziers, but the gold and silver vessels used in the celebration of the mass, with rich reliquaries and shrines containing the sacred remains of saints and martyrs. Some of these scenes were of the most disgraceful and disgusting nature. The Bishops Torné, Faucher, and Gay Vernon, for instance, took off each other's calottes, kicked them about like foot-balls, and tossed them up in the air, singing "ça ira." They then tore up their breviaries, and distributed the fragments.

Anacharsis Clootz was one of the most active agitators in this subversion of all religious establishments. He swore that the Pope had condemned him to imprisonment for life in a dungeon of Fort St. Angelo—that the Inquisition wanted to burn him alive in Lisbon; but that in Paris only he found the means of becoming the "orator of mankind" *(l'orateur du genre humain)*, and he therefore advocated the doctrine of atheism. Chaumette, Hébert, and other Jacobins, joined him, and it was decreed that no religious ceremonies should be

allowed; crosses were pulled down, all holy symbols destroyed, and, where a crucifix had been erected in cemeteries, a statue of Somnus, the god of sleep, was set up. The dismal cypress and yew were felled to the ground, and graves were decked with flowers and evergreens, Chaumette exclaiming that "the sweet odour, and the beautiful blossoms of flowers, should call to our minds cheerful associations, instead of lugubrious reflections, and I could wish," he added, "were it possible, to breathe in their perfumes the soul of my fathers." The statues of the martyrs of the Christian faith were knocked to pieces, and replaced by busts of Marat and Le Pelletier, who were considered martyrs of liberty.

Gobel, the Bishop of Paris, at the head of his clergy, proceeded to the Convention. He wore a cap of liberty on his head; in his hands he bore his mitre, his crozier, his cross, and episcopal ring; and, depositing them on the altar of the country, abjured his faith. Many other Bishops followed the example; but when Grégoire was questioned, he replied, with dignity, "If the revenue attached to a bishopric is a questionable subject, I throw up mine without regret or hesitation; but, as regards my position as a priest and a bishop, I cannot divest myself of it. My religion forbids it, and I

claim the protection decreed to every form of worship."

The churches were now stripped of all their sacred ornaments and clerical dresses. The mob carried them to the Convention, chaunting forth hallelujahs and psalms, and dancing the Carmagnole, in surplices, stoles, and other canonical vestments; leading asses and oxen, decorated with surplices, ecclesiastic caps and mitres; and the canopy that was once borne over the Host, was now carried over the busts of Marat and Le Pelletier, while the Cathedral of Notre Dame, and other churches, were converted into Temples of Reason. A solemn procession attended the Goddess of Reason, who was represented by a very fine woman, the wife of Monmoro, a printer. In our Section, the Goddess was an opera-dancer, the mistress of young Balbastre, of whom I have already spoken. She was dressed in a white muslin robe; an azure-coloured gauze mantle, studded with stars, hung loose on her shoulders, and her brow was crowned with a wreath of white roses. As she ascended her throne, the temple re-echoed hymns in her praise, performed by numerous musicians and singers, instead of the Gregorian chaunts that had so often assembled the votaries of St. Roch; who, with his faithful companion, his dog, became the subject of ribaldry, and of a song which

alluded to his sanctified end, as recorded in his legend,

> "Il rendit l'âme,
> En bon chrétien,
> Dans les bras de son chien."

Notwithstanding this melo-dramatic performance, and the revolting buffoonery that attended it, the worship of the Goddess of Reason had many proselytes; nor can we be surprised at its popularity, more especially amongst the lower order of society. For many years, Deism had been professed by the philosophic school, of whom Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, and their brother encyclopædians, were the acknowledged apostles; but atheism also had been maintained by Holbach, and many of his followers and disciples.

In a publication entitled "Système de la Nature," and attributed to Holbach, he plainly pleads the cause of atheists, yet in so feeble a manner, that the most sceptical reader who has maturely weighed his arguments, and reflected on their futility, could not deny the existence of a Creator. This work, abounding in ingenious sophisms, was published under the name of Mirabaud, Secretary to the French Academy, a worthy man, who would have felt much surprised at a mystification that attributed the work to him—a work not only placed in the index, but burned by the

public executioner,—had he not died in 1760, or twenty years before this production issued from the press of Paris, although it bears the impression of London. Mirabaud, who was a Jesuit, bore the reputation of a very pious and worthy man, and had been preceptor of several members of the royal family. This detestable publication had also been attributed to Robinet, author of another atheistic treatise, "de la Nature;" but I have already said that Baron d'Holbach, assisted by Diderot, was its presumed author. It is essentially the production of a materialist, who doubts of the existence of the mind, excepting as a principle, depending on the organization of matter. It also advocates many doctrines adduced in later days, and seeks to prove, by various experiments, that inanimate matter can pass into life—in short, mind, according to this writer, is merely a modification of matter.

Marat, when in England in 1775, had published an atheistical work on the same subject, called "Man, or the Principles and Laws of the Influence of the Soul on the Body, and of the Body on the Soul." Amongst other absurdities, he maintained that the connecting link between soul and body—the former being lodged in the meninges—is a semi-gelatinous fluid, and he en-

deavoured to prove it by showing that spirituous liquors, which renew the activity of the nervous fluid, contain no gelatine !

Impressed with these deistical doctrines, Christianity became the butt of the most disgusting and impious satire ; and we cannot but marvel, when we find Camille Desmoulins, on the eve of his trial, and, of course, of his execution, writing to his wife :—" I cannot but be persuaded that there is a great God, and that we shall meet again. Heaven has had pity on me, and blessed me with a dream, wherein I beheld thy beloved image." Yet the following day, when asked his age by Fouquier Tinville, he replied, " I am of the same age as the *sans culotte*, Jesus Christ—thirty-three." One can scarcely credit such blasphemy, even on the lips of an unbeliever, in the supreme hour of death.

Under these circumstances, their faith already shaken, and the ministers of the public worship having acknowledged themselves base deceivers, it is not just to accuse the nation of an infidelity which arose from a combination of various causes. This triumph was hailed by many men, even of superior understanding, as the dawn of a more rational religion, in which priestcraft and fanaticism would lose their influence on mankind—an influence ob-

tained only by representing the Creator as an inflexible and jealous judge, whose propitiation constituted a source of immense revenue, and a most iniquitous power; in the exercise and maintenance of which, humanity and every kindly feeling were trampled under foot by a proud and intolerant hierarchy, ever ready to overthrow any obstruction that sprung up in their triumphant career.

While such was the reflection of the thinking and reflecting part of society, the vulgar were indulged with pageantry, which replaced the mummeries of former ceremonies by more classic and intellectual rites. Instead of frankincense, burned in censors, flowers were scattered in the temple of Reason, and instead of the chants of untaught lay-clerks, sublime compositions were performed by able artists, accompanied by the rude blast of the *serpent*, which effectually marred the swelling peals of the solemn organ; while for prayers, in an unknown tongue, and supplications to a host of saints, eloquent discourses, illustrating the dignity of man, and the power of reason in guiding him to truth, were delivered by enthusiastic orators.

The result was inevitable. The Roman Catholic religion was destroyed, and none succeeded it. My excellent friend, the late Archbishop of Bordeaux, when one day conversing on the want of

a religion in France, gave as his opinion, "That when a Roman Catholic ceased to believe the assertions of his priest, he ceased to have any creed. Amongts the Protestants," he added, "it is different. There you may have a hundred different modes of worship and interpretations of the Scriptures—but the Scripture is the key-stone of all your multifarious establishments. It may be interpreted and commented on in the most absurd manner, and distorted by enthusiasm and ambition, still it is a guide; whereas, with us, the only guide is the clergy."

At this period, the spiritual directors of the people had not only abandoned them, but, in many instances, we have seen, acknowledged themselves impostors. I have already alluded to the refractory clergy, who, having refused to take the oath of allegiance to the country, had not only quitted their flocks, but kindled civil war in every direction where their voice was heard; thus, on the plea of their ultra-montane devotion and subserviency, adding to the perils of the State, and the calamities of the times.

The absurdity, or rather, the inefficiency, of the worship of Reason, soon became obvious—it was a fabric raised on a tottering foundation, for the operations of the reasoning faculties of man acknowledge no dogma—no *rationale*. They may

be applied, according to circumstances, to the most contradictory deductions and sophistical conclusions, since we cannot acknowledge any established premises or principles of action, and, in the midst of the greatest divergence of opinion, any self-styled reasonable man may conclude that he is right, and that his opponents have taken an erroneous view of the debated matter. Hence arose different sects — I can scarcely say doctrines, amongst these new-fangled worshippers of an undefined deity; comprehensible, no doubt, and not enveloped in mystic obscurity, but whose oracles were incessantly discrepant, and not unfrequently absurd. Moreover, this new creed, if such it may be named, was subversive of every acknowledged rule of morality, conventionally adopted for the welfare of society at large; for instance, one man might think it reasonable to have half-a-dozen wives, and another think that reason authorized him to take his neighbour's wife or daughter. Analogous conclusions might be arrived at in respect to any property that a man might want or wish for, seeing *no reason* why he should not be as well off in the world, as a more successful or lucky competitor for fortune's favour. Moreover, Reason was considered as the voice of Nature, and our animal

propensities were not to be checked by what are called artificial obstacles.

Enthusiasm and ambition now beheld a fair field for innovation and different absurd doctrines. Such was that of an old woman, called Catherine Théos, who called herself the "mother of God," and prophesied the advent a of new Messiah. A Carthusian monk, of the name of Gessle, and Robespierre, were the two apostles. The temple of this beldam was in the Rue Contrescarpe, near the Estrapade. When a disciple was admitted into this sanctuary, he was received by Gessle, who acted the part of high priest, in white robes and with a white veil. He took the neophyte by the hand, saying, "Come, humble mortal, and be introduced to immortality. The mother allows you to enter her sanctuary."

A woman of the name of Geoffrey, who was called *l'Eclaireuse*, now made her appearance, and, placing a bible on the table, with religious solemnity, looked at a clock and said, "The hour approaches; the mother will soon come to receive her children!" She then lighted a three-branched chandelier, a bell tinkled, and, falling on her knees, she exclaimed, "Now, children, prepare yourselves to sing the glory of the mother!"

Immediately a soft melody was sung, accompanied by an organ; a curtain rose, and, on a white throne, surrounded with a radiant halo, appeared the mother, a decrepit old woman, apparently shaking with the palsy. On each side of her were two lovely girls, dressed in all the seductive transparency of opera-dancers: one of them held a silver ewer, the other a damask napkin. Wings, of ostrich-plumes, hung from their shoulders, and their tunics were of azure crape, spangled with golden stars.

The religious rites now commenced. Dame Théos washed her forehead, nose, eyes, and ears, in rose-water, poured out for her by one of the pretty acolytes, and another dried the ablution. The old lady then said, in a tremulous voice, "Enter, ye worshippers." Two folding doors were thrown open, and the faithful, of both sexes, were introduced. They were seated on benches; when the priestess took the book, saying, "Brothers and sisters! Promise by a solemn oath to shed the last drop of your blood to protect and defend the Mother of God: if necessary, by force of arms, and to expose yourselves to every kind of torture and even to death in her cause."

The oath being taken, the priestess read aloud a chapter of the Apocalypse, and said, "The seven

seals are on the book of truth. Five are already broken, and the Messiah has promised to appear when the sixth seal shall be raised. But upon the breaking of the seventh, be of good cheer, humble mortals, whoever you may be, whatever you may behold! The earth shall be purified,—all mankind shall perish, excepting the elect, who shall never die. The first seal was the annunciation of the word; the second, the separation of religion; the third, the Revolution; the fourth, the destruction of royal power; the fifth, the union of nations; the sixth, the battles of the exterminating angels; the seventh, the resurrection of all the dead."

The neophyte was now led to the foot of the throne, when Catherine Théos gave him or her a kiss adding, " *Diffusa est gratia in labiis tuis.* My adopted child, thou hast received the seven gifts." She now traced the sign of election, by drawing her thumb in a horozontal line across the forehead, and then an oblique line from each temple, so as to describe a triangle; and the following hymn was sung:—

" Au seul Etre Suprême
Elévons tous nos cœurs,
Pour qu'il daigne lui-même,
Dissiper nos malheurs.

Pour son nom, pour sa gloire,
Formons des vœux,
Au champ de la victoire,
Courons heureux."

It has been affirmed, and I believe with some truth, that this sect was devised by Robespierre, as preparatory to his production of the worship of the Supreme Being, of whom, in his enthusiastic reveries, he considered himself the destined pontiff. He availed himself of the abolition of the established religion of the land, to introduce innovation; as it has been generally observed, that it is on such occasions that various religious sects arise, from the want men experience of some fresh illusions when the former ones have been swept away.

Perhaps one of the most impious mummeries of the time, was the establishment of a creed in the prison of the Conciergerie, where they erected an altar, dedicated to a divinity, whom they named Ibrascha, no doubt from some eastern tradition, and they drew out the following table of his tenets:—

"Woe to the man who believeth not in Ibrascha; but, nevertheless, show him compassion.

"Ibrascha was never incarnate, nor was he a virgin's son.

"Ibrascha said, 'Since I existed, the order of nature has never been disturbed by miracles, nor can its immutable laws ever be.' Ibrascha is an intelligence, emanating from Divinity, twenty-two thousand years ago. It wandered three thousand years on the waters, without resting: it wandered over fire, and birds, and beasts, and plants, and minerals. It stopped for a moment on the elephant, but it rested not. At last it rested on the head of a man of wisdom, and philosophy was created. This sage's name was *Pyplasofu*. He was industrious, feared by the wicked, and beloved by the just. When he had discovered truth and detected guilt, he closed not his eyes until he had promulgated the one, and chastised the other. His body was as immaculate as his soul. But a false sage appeared: his name was *Majechasmet*. He was jealous of *Pyplasofu*, and he said, 'I will teach falsehood to mankind,' and Religion was born—Religion, hostile to God and man! And the sons of *Majechasmet* persecuted the children of *Pyplasofu*.

"Glory to truth. Hearken, O ye men, to truth, nothing but the truth. Ibrascha has conquered,—light has dissipated darkness. Glory to Ibrascha! Praise his name, and curse all priests. A priest is

a parasite plant, that clings round the tree of truth, and chokes its growth. The wise are children of Ibrascha; Socrates was his beloved son. Glory to Ibrascha and to Socrates.

"Ibrascha has traced these words in letters of eternal fire, 'Liberty, Equality, Humanity!' Mothers, teach them to your babes, and cry, Glory to Ibrascha!"

It is scarcely to be believed that such a wild and impious creed could have originated amongst men doomed shortly to perish on the scaffold, perhaps, the very day after their fantastic invocation to an imaginary divinity. But what absurdities—what fatal errors, are not met with amongst fanatics! and Catherine Théos was not more absurd in her prophetic impostures, than Johanna Southcote or the disciples of Irvine!

France, thus demoralized and disorganized in all her former institutions, was now revelling in excesses; and Robespierre, who sought, in the daring flight of his luxuriant imagination and unbounded ambition, to become the founder of a sect, promulgated the worship of the Supreme Being, and the immortality of the soul. Some of his speeches on the occasion may be quoted, as specimens of an eloquence that might have been displayed in a better cause, and under less sus-

picious circumstances. In one of them he denounces the doctrines of atheism in the following energetic words :—

"Of what importance to us legislators are the idle hypotheses of various philosophers, who endeavour to explain the phenomena of nature? Let us leave such disquisitions to those eternal wranglers. It is not as metaphysicians, or as theologians, that we should consider them ; but, in the eyes of legislators, everything that is beneficial to the world, and practically good, constitutes truth. The belief in a Supreme Being, and the immortality of the soul, is a constant appeal to justice. Who gave to these bold declaimers against the existence of a God, the mission to proclaim to the world that a Creator does not exist? Proud advocate of such a sterile doctrine, thou canst never have felt a sublime love for thy country! What advantage can you reap by persuading man that a blind power presides over his destinies, and strikes, at hazard, both crime and virtue?—That his soul is nought but an idle breath, that expires at the entrance of his tomb? Will the idea of nothingness and nonentity inspire him with more noble and purer sentiments than the conviction of glorious immortality? Will it fill his breast with greater respect for his fellows and himself—with

more devotion to his country, and more audacity in braving the efforts of tyranny, and despising both death and voluptuous enjoyments? You, who weep the bereavement of a virtuous friend, are you not gratified with the idea that his most noble part has escaped from death? You, who weep on the tomb of a child or a wife, are you comforted by the man who tells you that they are nought but a vile dust? And you, unfortunates who fall under the blow of an assassin, is not your last breath an appeal to eternal justice? Innocence on the scaffold, will make a tyrant tremble on his throne. Would it assume that ascendancy, if the grave equalized the oppressor and the oppressed?

"Let us take history for our guide; observe how those men who influenced the destinies of empires, adopted one or other of these opposite systems; see with what art Cæsar pleads in the Roman Senate, in favour of the accomplices of Catiline, and wanders in a digression against the immortality of the soul: these notions appeared to him calculated to extinguish, in the breasts of the judges, the energies of virtue, so closely is the curse of crime associated with atheism. On the other hand, behold Cicero appealing to the sword of the law, and the wrath of the immortal Gods, to chastise treason. Socrates, on his couch of death,

conversed calmly with his friends on the immortality of the soul. Leonidas, at the Thermopylæ, when supping with his companions in arms on the eve of the execution of the most heroic project that human nature ever contemplated, invites them to join him, the following day, at another banquet in regions of eternal glory. Cato never wavered between Epicurus and Zeno. Brutus and his illustrious colleagues, who shared his dangers and his glory, also belonged to the sublime sect of the Stoics, who entertained such exalted views of the dignity of man. Stoicism produced the noble emulation of Brutus and of Cato, in the fearful epochs that followed the fall of Roman liberty; that preserved the honour of human nature, degraded, not only by the vices of the descendants of Cæsar, but by the criminal apathetic patience of the people."

It was after this discourse that Robespierre proposed a resolution, that the French people should acknowledge the existence of a Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul, and that the worship that was most welcome to the Supreme Being was the practice of the duties of man. Every tenth day, or *Décadi*, was allotted to His service, and festivals to honour social virtues, &c., &c., were instituted on those solemn meetings. 1. To the Supreme Being; 2. to mankind; 3. to the French

people; 4. to the benefactors of humanity; 5. to the martyrs of liberty; 6. to liberty and equality; 7. to the Republic; 8. to the freedom of the world; 9. to the love of country; 10. to the hatred of tyrants and traitors; 11. to truth; 12. to justice; 13. to modesty; 14. to glory; 15. to friendship; 16. to frugality; 17. to valour; 18. to good faith; 19. to heroism; 20. to disinterestedness; 21. to stoicism; 22. to love; 23. to conjugal fidelity; 24. to filial piety; 25. to childhood; 26. to youth; 27. to manhood; 28. to old age; 29. to misfortune; 30. to agriculture; 31. to industry; 32. to our ancestors; 33. to posterity; 34. to happiness.

This worship being established, the celebration of its inauguration was planned by Robespierre, and directed in its details and execution by the painter David, and Cuvelier, a celebrated writer of pantomimes and spectacles. On the façade of every church was inscribed in large characters:

Le peuple Français reconnaît l'existence de l'Etre Suprême, et l'immortalité de l'âme.

This new code was of course attended by the most ridiculous circumstances, and an enthusiast, of the name of Magenthies, proposed to the Convention, that the punishment of death should be

inflicted on all blasphemers who took the name of the Supreme Being in vain.

The first celebration of these festivals was most imposing. It was in the beginning of June, and the day was most resplendent. The preceding evening, crowds of young people had repaired to the Bois de Boulogne to collect branches of trees, and to the neighbouring fields and gardens to cull flowers; garlands and festoons of oak foliage, and wheat-sheaves, were hung from every window and thrown across the streets on the ropes of the *reverbères*, or night-lamps. The procession was numerous, and most picturesque in its appearance. Children in white tunics crowned with violets; youths with their brows shaded with myrtle; athletic men, in a Roman costume, and with chaplets of oak-leaves, were followed by old men, whose silvery hair was braided with ivy and olive-leaves. Women and children, in ancient costumes, bore baskets of flowers; and on a triumphal car, drawn by twelve white oxen, was borne the goddèss Ceres, represented by Clotilde, of the Opera. In this cortège moved the members of the Convention. They were dressed in garter blue coats, with steel buttons, with a tri-coloured scarf round their waists and three-coloured plumes in their hats; each of

them carried a nosegay, with ears of wheat; but at their head, and several paces in advance, walked Robespierre; he stepped out with an assumed, haughty, and proud bearing, little compatible with the notions of equality then entertained. He was evidently inflated with pride, and considered himself the pontiff of the reintegrated divinity. In front of the centre pavilion of the Tuileries was erected an immense amphitheatre, crowded with musicians and public functionaries. The front seats were reserved for the members of the Convention, who gradually took their seats, as the head of the procession reached the flight of steps leading to them. In front, were erected colossal statues of Atheism, Discord, and Egotism. Robespierre, in the centre and front of the Assembly, still preserved his predominance. A glorious hymn to the Supreme Being, the words by Chenier, the music by Gossec, was now performed. It might be considered a paraphrase of Pope's Universal Prayer; and the two first verses, as well as I can recollect, ran as follows:

Père de l'univers, suprême intelligence,
Bienfaiteur ignoré des aveugles mortels,
Tu révelas ton être à la reconnaissance,
Qui sut t'élever des autels.

Ton temple est sur les monts, sur la terre, et sur l'onde,
Tu n'eûs pas de passé, tu n'as pas d'avenir,
Et sans les occuper tu remplis tous les mondes,
Qui ne peuvent te contenir.

At the conclusion of this canticle, Robespierre made a long oration on the solemn occasion, and then, seizing a torch, he stepped down from the amphitheatre, and set fire to the statues of Atheism, Discord, and Egotism, which, being full of combustibles and crackers, were rapidly consumed, in a dense smoke, and with a loud explosion.

The orchestra now executed a piece of Mehul's, descriptive of the Battle of Fleurus; and the fire of the contending armies was imitated by a singular accompaniment of musketry and field-pieces, fired in time, at a signal of the leader. The effect was most surprising and effective. While this composition was performing, the procession started again for the Champ de Mars, Robespierre displaying, if possible, more arrogance and pride than before, heading the National Convention.

In the centre of the Champ de Mars (where the altar of the country had once been erected, and round which the mob had been fired upon by Bailly and Lafayette), stood an artificial mountain, of difficult ascent; a spreading cedar-tree was on

its summit, and the members of the Convention were seated around it, while the sanguinary triumvirate, Robespierre, St. Just, and the crippled Couthon, who had been carried up in an arm-chair, occupied the centre of the mountain, casting a look of proud disdain, not only on the multitude around them, but on their colleagues of the Convention.

Other hymns were now sung by numerous performers. Young men drew their Roman swords, and swore to die, if necessary, in the defence of their country, and women held up their babes and children, and consecrated them to the service of France and the Supreme Being! while salvos of artillery were pealing from the platform of the Invalides, and the procession returned to the Tuileries in the same order. The gardens were illuminated, fireworks were let off, and orchestras, placed in different parts, invited the pious people to end the festivity by dancing. Such was the *fête de l'Etre Suprême*, from whence may be dated the downfall of Robespierre, its founder. The summit of the pasteboard and canvas mountain, raised by theatrical carpenters and machinists, which he had proudly ascended, intoxicated with pride, proved his Tarpeian rock.

A crisis was evidently drawing nigh; a deadly

struggle between the leading parties, even between the *Comité de Salut Public* and *de Sureté Générale*, was about to take place. Still the guillotine was daily fed by crowds of victims sacrificed indiscriminately, to establish, if possible, a greater terror in the land. These events are matters of history, and for their cause and effect I must refer to the historians of this dismal epoch.

CHAPTER X.

I exert myself to obtain my brother's liberation—Interview with Robespierre—His mode of living—Cornélie Duplay—His unhappy disposition — Strange delusions — Miserable existence, and inordinate vanity—General opinion on the impracticability of a Republican form of Government—Marat and Danton's view of the subject—Various absurd schemes of Government—Duc d'Orléans—Transmutation of metals —Remains of Pascal.

My brother still remained a prisoner in the Collège des Ecossais. Having been successful in obtaining the recall of my father, and his liberation when arrested, through the exertions of the Albittes, I did not despair of being equally fortunate in favour of my brother. The Albittes afforded me the facility I needed, to see the most influential personages of the day, and my first visit was to Robespierre.

He lived in an obscure house, No. 396, in the Rue St. Honoré, at a carpenter's, of the name of Duplay, with whose family he boarded. Strange to say, I observed, over the street entrance, a wooden eagle, that

looked like a figure-head of a ship. A singular coincidence in the dwelling of a man who, beyond a doubt, aimed at dictatorship. I was ushered into a large room on the *rez-de-chaussée*, at the bottom of a timber-yard, and was most kindly received by an intelligent young man with a wooden leg, whom I thought was his brother, but found to be a nephew of the landlord, and Robespierre's secretary: I read to him my memorial, but when he saw that it was in favour of an Englishman, he shook his head, and frankly told me, that I had but little prospect of succeeding in my application. He himself ushered me into Robespierre's *cabinet*. He was reading at the time, and wore a pair of green preservers: he raised his head, and, turning up his spectacles on his forehead, received me most graciously. My introducer having stated that I was *un petit ami de Dorival Albitte,—un petit Anglais,*

Que veux tu ? que demandes tu ? was his brief and abrupt question. I referred him to the contents of my memorial, on which he cast a mere glance, and then said, "If it were in my power to liberate an Englishman, until England sues for peace, I would not do it—but why come to me? Why not apply to the *Comité?* Every one applies to me, as if I had an omnipotent power." Here a strange twitching convulsed the muscles of his face.

At this present moment I recollect the agitation of his countenance. He then added, "Your brother is much safer where he is. I could not answer for the life of any Englishman were he free. All our miseries are the work of Pitt and his associates; and if blood is shed, at his door will it lie. Do you know, *enfant*, that the English have set a price on my head, and on the heads of every one of my colleagues? That assassins have been bribed with English gold—and by the Duke of York—to destroy me? The innocent ought not to suffer for the guilty, otherwise every Englishman in France should be sacrificed to public vengeance."

I was astonished. After a short pause he added, "Do you know that the English expected that this Duke of York would have succeeded the Capets? Do you know Thomas Paine and David Williams?" he continued, looking at me with an eagle eye; "they are both traitors and hypocrites."

He now rose, and paced up and down his room, absorbed in thought; he then suddenly stopped, and, taking me by the hand, said, "*Adieu, mon petit, ne crains rien pour ton frère.*" He then turned off abruptly, and my guide led me out.

There was something singularly strange and

fantastic in this extraordinary man, at least, so it appeared to me. He smiled with an affected look of kindness; but there was something sardonic and demoniac in his countenance, and deep marks of the small pox added to the repulsive character of his physiognomy. He appeared to me like a bird of prey—a vulture; his forehead and temples were low, and flattened; his eyes were of a fawn colour, and most disagreeable to look at; his dress was careful, and I recollect that he wore a frill and ruffles, that seemed to me of valuable lace. There were flowers in various parts of the room, and several cages, with singing birds, were hanging on the walls and near the window, opening on a small garden. There was much of the *petit-maître* in his manner and appearance, strangely contrasting with the plebeian taste of the times. I was told that, in the society of women, he could make himself very agreeable; and the hand which, perhaps, one hour before, had signed the death-warrant of many of his supposed enemies, would indict sonnets and acrostics: while the voice that had eloquently denounced hundreds of victims, would sing gentle romances and love-sick ditties.

A few years before this sad epoch, he had got his portrait painted, with one hand upon his

heart, and the other holding out a nosegay, with the motto, "*à celle que j'aime.*"

On taking my leave, his secretary told me that he was certain Robespierre would be glad to see me, if ever I needed his assistance. I availed myself of this permission, and called upon him several times, although I only saw him twice after my first introduction; indeed, it was very difficult to obtain access to his presence. On these occasions I never observed about the house those bands of ruffians by whom he was said to be guarded, although his door was crowded with wretched postulants who claimed his protection and influence.

By all accounts, his domestic concerns must have been anything but comfortable. It appears, that, after the events in the Champ de Mars, he feared that he had been compromised, and sought a refuge in the house of Duplay. He then boarded with the family, which consisted of Duplay, his wife, and three daughters; to one of them, the eldest, of the name of Léonore, he became attached, and gave her the Roman appellation of Cornelia. One of her sisters, Elizabeth, was married to Lebon, a townsman of his, and one of the most ferocious of the Departemental proconsuls. From what I could learn, this partiality to Cornelia, was the source of much discord. Robes-

pierre's sister wanted him to reside with her, and did all she could to embroil him with the family, by exciting the jealousy of the favourite; an easy attempt, as Robespierre, whose vanity was insatiable, was, notwithstanding his stern and frigid appearance, engaged in many *affaires de cœur*. It would seem that his connexion with Eléonore Duplay was not of an immoral nature, and it was generally thought by the family that they were to be married; others, on the contrary, assert that they lived as man and wife.

Of an atrabilious temperament, he was morose, and apprehensive of constant perils; inflexible in his passions, he was wavering in his determination. This indecision was evident in his manuscripts, in which constant erasures and interlineations, not only as to style, but in opinions, showed the uncertainty of his mind. Although eloquent and volcanic in his language, he was anything but a man of action, and always hesitated in coming to a determination in the hour of need. To a certain degree he possessed moral courage, but it was doubtful whether he was capable of displaying physical bravery when tested by imminent danger. This pusillanimity was shewn in various events. On the 10th of August, and other doubtful movements of the populace, he not only did not appear, but concealed himself. All his

relatives asserted that from his childhood he had been of a timid character, and naturally humane. It is well known that, at the commencement of his career, he used his best endeavours to obtain the abolition of the penalty of death. But this circumstance cannot extenuate his stern cruelty, since Marat, the most blood-thirsty ruffian of the day, had also striven to obtain the same object. His subsequent apparent cold-hearted cruelty, surprised all who knew him; but I believe much of that reckless spirit of destruction, arose from his constant apprehensions of falling a victim to his opponents, whom he sought to crush, ere they overthrew his power. A man of his temperament, who fed upon gall, and whose life was spent in a constant fear of evil, and endeavours to avert it —vain and ambitious, and little scrupulous about the means in attaining his ends, may easily be urged to the most ferocious determinations. He was, moreover, a fanatic, both in politics and religion, as far as he considered it necessary to his purpose. His association with Catherine Théos, his haughty and supercilious bearing, when he considered himself a pontiff of the Supreme Being, self-invested with sacerdotal authority, afforded strong evidence of his enthusiastic pride.

Many of his convictions were positive hallucinations. In every event he beheld Pitt and

English gold, and he attributed to foreign corruption, every calamity that visited the country. His life might have been called an incubus. Like a maniac escaped from restraint, he destroyed everything that appeared to check his career. For hours he would rest his forehead on both his hands, and often complained of violent head-ache, that obliged him to compress his brow with a tightened handkerchief. His eyes, although they seemed to scintillate with ardour, were painful and impatient of light; he therefore wore green preservers. His mode of living was abstemious and frugal in the extreme, but he would occasionally indulge in a free use of Burgundy wine. He drank a great deal of strong coffee, which was followed by a *petit verre*, and I have been informed that he often took a dose of laudanum at night; his sister told me that he invariably carried poison about him. He also rarely went out without pocket pistols, which had once belonged to the King, and a stiletto. On these occasions he was always accompanied by a large dog, of the Pyrenean breed, of which he was very fond. Strange to say, several of these monstrous anomalies of the Reign of Terror, were most partial to animals; and the ferocious Couthon would shed tears when his favourite spaniel was ill. Robespierre's dog always kept watch at the door of his master's bed-chamber.

His suspicious nature made him break off with all his friends, and he then considered them as implacable enemies, whom he sought to destroy. He has been known to send to the scaffold women he had loved, if such a man was capable of ever entertaining so generous a passion, so soon as he suspected them of infidelity or indifference. When boldly threatened, he was convulsed with concentrated rage and fear—his harsh features become more salient—he turned pale, and his whole frame shook in convulsive rigors; his teeth chattered, his articulation became difficult, and foam issued from the angles of his mouth. On such occasions, he has been known to thrust one of his hands in his bosom, and lacerate it with his nails.

Such was the violence of his passions, that he sometimes appeared threatened with suffocation. This circumstance occurred during his accusation before the Convention, when one of the Deputies exclaimed, "*Robespierre, le sang de Danton t'etouffe !*" A fearful denunciation, when his conscience must have reminded him, that Danton had once been the dearest and most faithful of his friends. That the wretch had moments of remorse, cannot be doubted: often during the night he would start from his sleep, and pronounce the name of one of his victims.

He was always agitated when Madame Roland was mentioned, for he could not have forgotten that this enthusiastic and fascinating woman had not only saved his life, but assisted to bring him, from comparative obscurity, into public light.

It was under the influence of this constant apprehension of all around him, that he entertained the most absurd ideas, and although a man of strong intellectual grasp, when he was thus suspecting every one and everything, he actually became what the Parisians call a *gobe-mouche*, or a person who attaches implicit credence to the most absurd assertions. This was evinced by his actual belief, that England and Austria were the fomentors of all the disturbances that took place; to them he attributed the massacres in the prisons, and even the establishment of the worship of the goddess of Reason. Under this impression, he delivered the following absurd speech to the Jacobins,—"The anarchists, the corrupt, the atheists, are all agents of Pitt; and tyrants, satisfied with the audacity and artifice of their agents, have embraced every occasion to display, to their subjects, a dismal picture of the disastrous absurdities which they themselves have paid for. Such, they exclaim, is the French nation: what will you then gain by overthrowing us, when you behold

these Republicans more corrupt than you may imagine we are?"

One can scarcely believe that such language could issue from the lips of any one but a monomaniac. Yet, despite his hatred of the English, he admired our institutions, and he once told me, that he was descended, on the maternal side, from an ancient Irish family.

In this wretched state of constant anxiety, he often affirmed that he was the slave of liberty—a living martyr of the Republic, doomed to be consumed by a slow fire; and I verily believe, a more miserable being could scarcely be found.

There can be no doubt that, as far as regarded pecuniary interest, he deserved the appellation of *incorruptible*. His ambition was to obtain a name in history, and wealth he despised; nay, his egregious vanity made him proud of his poverty. If he was beloved, more especially by women, he must have been cherished for his personal qualifications, and not on account of any benefit he could confer. If he was esteemed by his followers, this good opinion must have arisen from a respect of what he considered his virtues. Still was he a hypocrite. His pretended reconciliation with the associates with whom he had quarrelled, was a mere snare to draw them into his toils; and, when he professed friendship and cordiality, a

deadly hate, and plans of revenge, were fostered in his dark soul.

It is thus, that this too celebrated man has been considered an historical riddle. According to circumstances, ferocity and benevolence seemed so blended in his character; virtue and vice so ostensibly tangled in his actions, the Protean forms he assumed were so various, that it was no easy matter to delineate, or even to conceive, his true disposition. His jealousy equalled his vanity; and, strange to say, although he professed to desire the welfare of the Republic and the success of her cause, every dispatch that brought tidings of victory from her armies, was not only received with evident displeasure, but he went so far as to denounce the florid reports of those brilliant successes as written with a *légéreté académique!*

I saw him only three or four times. He received me distantly, but cordially. But, on returning home from these interviews, I full well recollect telling my father, that he appeared to me to be a madman. I often met his sister and Eleonore Duplay. It was chiefly from them that I collected the information regarding him; which, as far as my memory serves me, I have recorded in these *souvenirs.*

Robespierre's eloquence was the resu't of study, and of practice. At first, his delivery was difficult,

and his language anything but concise or logical; and, when his expressions were correct, his disagreeable, shrill voice rendered his orations ridiculous, and often subjected him to the sneers of his auditors. To overcome these obstacles, he endeavoured to form his style by the perusal of Rousseau, whom he took as his model, and by reciting tragedies of Racine and Voltaire; but the former writer was his favourite, and he often read his works aloud to the assembled family of the Duplays, who looked upon him as a demi-god. St. Just, Couthon, David, and Legendre, were his most frequent visitors and companions; and many mechanics, friends of his hosts, would also spend their *soireés* in this motley assembly. He had once moved in the distinguished circle of Madame Roland, but there his comparative insignificance lowered him in his own estimation, and he ever after fostered that deadly hatred that inferior capacities entertain towards those that outshine them; and, as a man of action, backed by Marat and the multitude, he soon triumphed over the intellectual superiority of his opponents.

From all that I could ever hear of this fearful meteor of the times, he aimed at an eventual dictatorship. Marat, the Jacobin clubs, and the

Commune, supported him with an overwhelming physical power, ready to sweep away all obstacles that could impede his career. Marat had repeatedly asserted that France wanted a powerful Dictator. Danton was his most dangerous opponent. Both were convinced that a Republican form of government was impossible. The country was too extensive; its geographical situation, its neighbourhood of powerful monarchs, ever ready to maintain a system of despotism—the reckless ambition of the leaders of parties, rendered still more perilous from the gross ignorance and inconstancy of the masses,—were circumstances that would invariably endanger the tranquillity of a Republic, and plunge it in constant anarchy. Danton was of a similar opinion; he was anxious, in concert with Dumouriez, to establish a military form of government, ever ready to crush opposition. According to his plan, France was to be ruled by a Generalissimo, and the military administration entrusted to a tribunal presided over by a Grand Judge, with a Grand Censor attached to him, to act as an Attorney and Solicitor-General. These magistrates were to be selected amongst civilians, although obliged to wear a military costume. Four judges, and as many substitutes, were to form this court, which was to try every

individual who had infringed the constitution, which was to have been called *Les Capitulaires de France*, and framed by an aulic council.

This body was to be considered as the *Corps Législatif*, and their laws submitted for approval to the Generalissimo and his tribunal, and its members were to be denominated the " Censors of France, assembled in aulic council." They were to sit for one third of each month, at the expiration of which, the *Capitulaires* were to be drawn out and presented.

The aulic council and tribunal were to nominate the magistrates and the members of the minor tribunals of the land; and in every court, the Generalissimo had a right to preside, to suspend the debates, and to accept or reject the *Capitulaires*. For the facility of this administration, France was to be divided into military districts and cantons, each having its tribunal. The aulic council was first to be selected by the Generalissimo, and afterwards elect members to fill up casual vacancies.

Previously to his demise, the Generalissimo was to nominate his successor, in a secret act confided to the council, but which act, during his life, he might alter at pleasure, the last alteration remaining in force.

The Generalissimo was to have the command of the army, and to be entrusted with the military execu-

tion, and the maintenance, of the law. The aulic council, the tribunal, and the Generalissimo, were to be independent of each other. The Generalissimo, the Grand Judge, and the Grand Censor, to be inviolable; all the other members of the State subject to the decision of jury, formed of the chiefs of every military division, convoked by the Generalissimo at the request of the accused, who could be imprisoned only by a warrant of the Grand Judge, issued under the authority of the president of the aulic council, after a due deliberation of that body.

There can be no doubt that the Duc d'Orléans at one time aimed at the sovereignty, and afterwards at the post of Generalissimo. Laclos and Danton aided his endeavours—both were sordid and ambitious; yet it is not believed that Egalité expended much money in bribery; he was of too avaricious a character. He had often been heard to say that he preferred a crown of six francs, to popular opinion; and so great was his thirst for wealth, that it has been positively maintained that he not only believed in the possibility of the transmutation of metals, but actually worked, in a secret laboratory, in the pursuit of the *great work*. It is affirmed that, on one occasion, when a crazy astrologer told him that the bones of a person who had died under some peculiar

stellary influence were necessary for the experiments, on examining almanacs, the celebrated Pascal was found to answer these mystic *desiderata*, and that the sexton of the church in which he was buried was bribed to allow his coffin to be broken open.

Another scheme was, to divide the Republic into northern and southern states; then came a municipal form of government, each principal district and city to frame its own municipal and local laws, and levy its own revenue. Endless were the schemes of government entertained by all parties; but all were unanimous in the conviction that a Republic was a Utopian dream that could never be realized. In a Republic that can present any chance of stability, the nation must be of a reflective, moderate, and calm character. A reckless, fickle, and frivolous people like the French, are not calculated to stand by any permanent form of elective government, and need the iron hand of power to control their aberrations.

The Girondins were staunch and pure Republicans—such they lived and died—and with them died the young Republic. After their fall, France was governed by the Committees, and these were ruled by a triumvirate. The first triumvirate consisted of Robespierre, Danton, and Marat. The latter having been assassinated, and Danton sent to the scaffold,

Robespierre associated himself with St. Just and Couthon. When it is maintained that Robespierre did not approve of the bloody scenes that daily disgraced the country, the assertion falls to the ground when we consider the character of his immediate and confidential associates in power :—Danton, the organizer of the massacre of the prisons; Marat, the most ferocious of the Jacobins; Couthon, a cold-hearted and smooth-tongued murderer; and St. Just, one of the pro-consuls of the armies, but also one of the most sanguinary executioners of the Reign of Terror: a very young man, he was an enthusiast in bloodshed, and, at the same time, calculated deeply and calmly on passing events. Robespierre needed his influence with the armies, in which he was a check upon the commanders; but, once a Dictator, St. Just would have been one of his first victims. Couthon he did not fear; he was the mere instrument—the arm of slaughter. St. Just's was the head that planned his operations, and Robespierre must have struck it off to reign.

At this period, I also saw Barrère, to whom I had been introduced both by the Albittes and my old friend, Dugazon, the comedian. He lived in the Rue St. Honoré, near the Place Vendôme, in an elegant apartment, the ante-chamber of which was ever crowded with petitioners, soliciting his assist-

ance. He was a man of highly polished manners, possessing much suavity, and would have been thought of gentle disposition. He spoke English tolerably well. In his room was a collection of shells, and when he observed that I was looking at them with a curious eye, he said, "As the son of a Dutchman, I suppose you must like shells;" and when he heard me remark on the beauty of some of his, he gave me some very valuable duplicates. He made the same observation as Robespierre on my brother's imprisonment, and added, "that the English were much safer in a *maison de détention* than if they were at large in such troublesome times."

Barrère's gentleness of manners had obtained for him the name of *l'Anacréon de la guillotine;* and he certainly would have deceived the most observant. He was the *rapporteur* of the *Comité de Salut Public,* and clothed the most sanguinary reports with an elegance of language that scattered roses on the tombs of their victims, whom he decorated with garlands before their immolation. In the whole Revolution, there was perhaps not an actor in the fearful transactions of the day whose heart was more corrupt. Fouché was the only one who could have vied with him in utter depravity. Barrère had been educated in the profligate school of the Duc d'Orléans.

The only member of the Government I saw, whose brutality revolted me, was Danton. There was something inexpressibly savage and ferocious in his looks, and in his stentorian voice. His coarse shaggy hair gave him the appearance of a wild beast. To add to the fierceness of his repulsive countenance, he was deeply marked with the small-pox, and his eyes were unusually small, and sparkling in surrounding darkness, like the fabulous carbuncle. David, who looked upon him as a demi-god, attempted several times to delineate this horrid countenance, but in vain; exclaiming: "*Il serait plus facile de peindre l'éruption d'un volcan, que les traits de ce grand homme.*"

Danton had been the chief instigator of the massacres in the prisons, and suggested the idea of casting the mangled remains of the slaughtered victims into the catacombs, that run under the Faubourg St. Jacques. It has been said that he bitterly repented the part he had taken in that diabolical butchery; and this tardy return to a sense of common humanity was attributed to his attachment to his young wife and children. When Robespierre sent him to the guillotine, he met his fate with his usual audaciousness and lofty bearing; but when on the scaffold, he shed mingled tears of grief and rage in being torn from all he cared for in life, and subdued by an antagonist

whom he thoroughly despised, and had so often and so boldly defied. Danton was a man of far more elevated attainments than his opponent. He was a shrewd and daring statesman, and capable of entertaining extensive and comprehensive views of public affairs. He despised the low craft and hypocrisy of his rival in power. It was this conviction of superiority that lost him. He blindly fell into the toils of his deceitful opponent, who defended his cause, while his secret machinations prepared his destruction. His execution was a great triumph for Robespierre, although it accelerated his own downfall, and Danton's exclamation when apostrophizing the tyrant, on his way to the scaffold, was truly prophetic: "*Malheureux ! je t'entraînerai dans la tombe avec moi !*" His execution witnessed one of those scenes of levity that seemed to render death a jocose matter. Lacroix, who was beheaded with him, was a man of colossal stature, and, as he descended from the cart, leaning upon Danton, he observed, "Do you see that axe, Danton? Well, even when my head is struck off, I shall be taller than you!"

Danton was venal, and in many instances had received bribes from the Court and the Duc d'Orléans, to whom he had once been devoted; but, when a rupture took place between them, he showed the malignity of his character, by asserting,

amongst other malicious reports, that the Duc de Chartres was not the son of Égalité, but had been exchanged at nurse for a female child; and he sought to prove his ignoble origin, by the courage he displayed at the battle of Jemappes. Howbeit, this monster gave me but little consolation regarding my brother; and, after having cast a hasty glance on my petition, he vociferated: "You may thank your stars, *petit malheureux*, that you and all your family have not been sacrificed to public indignation, to avenge the wrongs inflicted on us by your perfidious country!" I need not add, that I was rejoiced when I left his room, and hastened down stairs much more rapidly than I had ascended them.

CHAPTER XI.

Approaching struggles—Madame de St. Amaranthe—Madame de Sartines—Grandmaison—Cécile Rénault—L'Admiral—Robespierre involved in a supposed conspiracy—The Elèves de Mars—Vadier—Aristocracy of Robespierre—His fall.

After the excitement of the *féte de l'Etre Suprême*, an ominous stillness seemed to prevail, while clouds gathering on the political horizon, threatened an approaching tempest. Hostile parties appeared to view each other with that concentrated feeling of mingled hate and apprehension, which might inspire two mighty armies on the eve of the termination of an armistice; applied by both to recruit their forces and plan their destructive operations.

My lovely protectress, Madame de Caux, who was generally called by her party *la belle Hortense*, and to whose influence with her brothers, the Albittes, and with Barrère, I owed the life of my father

and my brother, and probably my own, did not disguise her apprehension; and one evening, with tears in her eyes, she felicitated herself that both her brothers were on a mission, as there would soon be *une jolie débacle* (a precious breaking up). I observed that Barrère, who very rarely visited her before, came frequently to see her.

Robespierre, inflated with imprudent pride, had seriously compromised his power in the late festivals, where, as we have seen, he assumed the haughty bearing of a dictator and a Sovereign Pontiff. He perceived his perilous position, and, with his two associates, St. Just and Couthon, was preparing to weather the approaching storm.

He rarely went to the *Comité de Salut Public*, which had, without his participation, transferred their sittings from the ground-floor of the pavilion of the Tuileries, in which they had usually met, to an apartment on the first floor, leading by a dark corridor to the hall of the Convention, and here they deliberated with closed doors.

Two days after the inauguration of the Supreme Being, Robespierre, who had witnessed the coldness with which he was received by his colleagues, and whose ears had been struck by the murmurs and whispered observations that arose from the surrounding multitude, had been anxious to arm himself with still greater powers of destruction, and

had demanded of the Convention a re-organization of the Revolutionary Tribunal, with an increased jurisdiction. His enemies, who were now becoming more numerous, plainly perceiving that this additional influence was only demanded, to add their names to those of the proscribed Girondins and all his opponents, resisted the motion, and, for the first time, displayed symptoms of an opposition to his tyrannical sway. Robespierre was obliged to conceal his anger, but, from that day, his visits to the *Comité de Salut Public* became less frequent.

Although Robespierre did not attend their councils, he still employed his agents and satellites to keep up the reign of terror, and executions were more numerous and indiscriminate than ever. Moreover, his host, Duplay, father of his Cornélie, was foreman of the jury of the hateful Tribunal, and, receiving his secret instructions from him, exercised an arbitrary influence on his brother jurors, although all of them were the devoted creatures of the Dictator.

This increase of bloodshed not only formed part of his project to overthrow his enemies, but arose from a spirit of dire revenge, as, notwithstanding his influence, he had not been able to save Madame de St. Amaranthe and her lovely daughter, Madame de Sartines, from the scaffold.

Madame de St. Amaranthe had been on the stage, and her society was considered one of the most agreeable *réunions* in Paris; her *salon* was the *rendezvous* of distinguished literary men, politicians, and popular actors; a *liaison* had long existed between her and Fleury, the comedian, and her daughter, who had married M. de Sartines son of a former Lieutenant-General of the police, was not without her favourites amongst *les amis de la maison*, nor did she betray any jealousy of feeling when her husband publicly intrigued with the actress Grandmaison, who was also an *intime* of the family. During the Reign of Terror, Madame de St. Amaranthe was afraid of keeping up any establishment, and her house became a sort of *pension*, where the guests, ostensibly, paid for their entertainment. Robespierre was first introduced into this society by the Girondins.

The amiable hostess was an enthusiast, and not unfrequently would indulge with Robespierre in some of the religious illusions with which he fancied himself inspired. We have seen that he was the apostle of the creed of the "Mother of God," Catherine Théos; and his ambition and vanity were both flattered by the distinction of being considered the high priest of a sect, and a sort of oracle in the aristocratic circle of La St. Amaranthe.

At one time she had quitted Paris, but, contrary to the advice of all her friends, more especially of La Grandmaison, she regretted her former fashionable influence, and returned to the capital, opening, as I have already stated, a *Pension Bourgeoise.*

Here Robespierre frequently dined; he often spoke of Catherine Théos and Madame de St. Amaranthe, her daughter, and several ladies of their acquaintance visited the temple of the Sybil, and were initiated in her mysteries.

Although Robespierre was in general a very frugal and temperate man, yet would he occasionally enjoy the pleasures of the table, and not object to an exhilirating glass of Burgundy or Champagne. He was flattered by the ladies around him, and it is said that, smitten by the charms of his lovely hostess, he was, sometimes, incautious in his conversation, allowing his secret ambitious thoughts to transpire in his enthusiastic effusions, in what he called the worship of the Supreme Being, and he not unfrequently hinted that he contemplated a general reform in the condition of France.

Mademoiselle Grandmaison, notwithstanding her *liaison* with Sartines, kept up a former intimacy with Trial, an actor of the same theatre, who had been an *aide-de-camp* of the ruffian Henriot, the Commander of the National Guard, and a

creature of the Jacobins. Somehow or other, he had broken off with his chief, most probably on account of his brutality, as he was always under the influence of liquor, and most abusive and intemperate in his language. The imprudence of Robespierre was made known to Trial by La Grandmaison, and reached the ears of his party. It has been said that the jealousy of Cornélie Duplay, Robespierre's intended wife, or mistress, had been excited, and that she had determined to rid herself of a rival, and hasten the destruction of Madame de St. Amaranthe. However this may be, Robespierre's frequent visits to her house had often been the subject of warm discussion between them. The *coterie* of the St. Amaranthes was doomed to destruction. A determined enemy of Robespierre, Vadier, was their accuser; he knew that, in denouncing this unfortunate, but fascinating family, he would either induce Robespierre to seek to save them at his peril, or expose him to the charge of the basest ingratitude, and want of every feeling of honour, if he allowed them to perish.

Having hatched this diabolical plot, Vadier associated the St. Amaranthe family with a supposed conspiracy of a young girl of the name of Cécile Rénault, and an unfortunate man named L'Admiral, who had formed the project of assassinating Robespierre. This L'Admiral had been

employed in the commissariat of Dumouriez, and had realised a considerable sum at Brussels by his peculations. Dismissed from the army, he led a wandering life, until poverty irritated him, and he contemplated the destruction of Robespierre. Not being able to meet him, he fell upon Collot d'Herbois, whom he considered a *buveur de sang* as atrocious as his chief; but, his pistol having hung fire, Collot seized him, and he was sent to the Conciergerie.

About the same time, a young girl, of the name of Cécile Rénault, was accused of having attempted the life of Robespierre. She had repeatedly asked to see him, but to no purpose; and her earnest inquiries about him leading to suspicion, she was apprehended and searched. Two knives were found about her, one of them a *couteau poignard,* and on being examined as to her intentions, she replied, that she only wanted to see what sort of a man was a tyrant. This reply appeared a mere subterfuge; and, two English guineas having been found in her purse, which she asserted had been put in it she knew not how, it was decided that she was an emissary of Pitt. A most ridiculous story was also circulated, that Charlotte Corday, in a white robe, stained with blood, had appeared to her, with a dagger in her hand, and, telling her that she was

then in a realm of bliss, beyond mortal control, exhorted her to follow her sublime example, and rid the world of a sanguinary monster—more cruel, if possible, than Marat. Although this romantic story was most absurd, it was generally believed; and Barrère, in denouncing the plot for assassinating both Robespierre and Collot d'Herbois, as a conspiracy of Pitt and the English Government, proposed that, from that day, every Englishman or Hanoverian taken prisoner should be immediately put to death.

This supposed plot produced a powerful sensation and, to all appearance, tended to restore Robespierre to his former popularity. But this was not the intention of his enemies. They had discovered that he contemplated their overthrow—that he and his colleagues received the reports of their emissaries without the knowledge of the *Comité*,* and that they were directed to them, often written either in cypher or in sympathetic ink.

Another circumstance increased their apprehension. Robespierre had proposed and obtained

* These reports were forms drawn out in columns, for the insertion of the names, the abodes, the private and public conduct of the persons whose movements they wished to be ascertained, with the names of their friends and associates, the hours of their meeting, and, if possible, the subject of their conversation, &c. &c. an *espionnage*, resembling the reports of the familiars of the inquisition.

the formation of a corps of about six thousand youths, between the age of fourteen and seventeen, incapable of forming any decided opinion on passing events. They were formed in a legion called *Les Elèves de Mars*, and encamped on the Plaine des Sablons, near the Bois de Boulogne. They were under the command of an officer of the name of Labretéche, a devoted instrument of Robespierre and St. Just.

The formation of this corps, which might have been called a Prætorian guard, did not excite the slightest suspicion. It was intended as a model for the organization of the army, and a school for officers. Nothing, indeed, could be more admirable than this phalanx of young men. Their uniform was devised by David, and consisted of a brown frock coat or tunic, double-breasted, red trowsers, and an elegant leather helmet; they wore no stiff stocks, but their shirt collars were broad and turned down. Their arms consisted of a musket, and a Roman sword of the most chaste design; the colour of the cloth of the scabbard varying according to companies. They had no pouches, but in front of the leather girdle of each was a cartouche-box, covered with a flap of tiger or leopard skin. Nothing could exceed the martial appearance of this youthful body. They were

constantly drilled, but they did not complain of the fatigue, for vanity made them anxious to submit to it, as crowds of Parisians used to flock to their camp, to witness their exercises and their manœuvres. Two brigades of field pieces, admirably served, formed part of this levy.

Robespierre's antagonists did not view this exclusive force in the same light as the public, but shrewdly considered it as forming part of his occult and crafty projects.

The supposed conspiracy of L'Admiral and the poor girl, Rénault, proved an admirable opportunity to involve Robespierre in irretrievable difficulties. It was said that this plot was formed by the Royalists and Aristocrats, and Vadier plainly told Robespierre, that he accused the family of St. Amaranthe, and their associates, of being deeply implicated in its extensive ramifications. Robespierre could not conceal his emotion on this information. He not only had been an intimate visitor of the family, but was devoted to the fascinating woman. He dared Vadier to denounce them. Vadier, beholding his triumph in the convulsed features of his antagonist, smiled at his threat—and accused him of aiming at the dictatorship, until he drew from the cruel coward tears of smothered rage and grief.

From that moment his visits to the *Comité* became even more distant, and it was evident that he occupied his time in devising means of repelling the intended attack.

His opponents, in the meantime, lost no precious moments, and they endeavoured to heap ridicule on their ambitious rival, well aware that ridicule, with the French, was a most potent weapon of destruction. The absurd creed and mummeries of Catherine Théos, were now associated with the Pontiff's masquerade of the Supreme Being. The most ludicrous and indecent anecdotes on the subject were widely circulated, and his connexion with the aristocrat Amaranthe, became not only a ground of sarcasm, but of political accusations. He was, therefore, bound to defend them, or save them, as they were all doomed to die.

Sixty-two victims were sent to the scaffold. With few exceptions, they were unknown to each other. Some of the most distinguished nobles of the land were carted to the guillotine at the same time. They occupied eight tumbrils, and were all clothed in the red cloaks (*les chemises rouges*), in which assassins were executed. It is related of the lovely daughter of Madame de St. Amaranthe, Madame de Sartines, that when this horrid garment was cast over them, she exclaimed, with the usual levity displayed on similar occasions,

"They had better give us red hats, then we shall all look like cardinals!"

I beheld the solemn procession on its march. It was a terrific—a heart-rending exhibition. Sixty-two fellow-creatures, wrapped in scarlet robes, dragged to the scaffold; the beauty of the women, rendered more conspicuous by the blood-coloured drapery they wore. Their attractions—the youth of some of them! Madame de St. Amaranthe's son, who was but a boy of fourteen, excited general compassion. For the first time, I beheld the populace silent—some of them affected to tears; and many turned their heads away from the dismal sight. The usual ingenuity of cruelty had not been forgotten. To add to the wretched feelings of the unfortunates, M. de Sartines was placed in the same cart with his wife and his mistress; for his connexion with Grandmaison had involved her in the destruction of his family—but the wife and the mistress serenely smiled. There could not linger any enmity in such a supreme hour of agony.

Robespierre had now to drain the cup of bitterness to its very dregs. This wholesale carnage was attributed to him. The torrents of blood spilt that day, fell like a cataract on his own devoted head, hastening his fall!

During the lifetime of this extraordinary man,

his character was but little known. Enthusiastic and ambitious—it was thought by some that he acted upon certain principles, and on a fixed idea. I was too young to form an opinion on the subject; but my father, who, in the affairs of others, was a man of sound judgment and quick apprehension, as well as my friend Servois, and various persons who frequented our house, always considered him a man whom vanity and pride would have led to any excess that could carry his views into execution. In regard to his crimes, it is possible that he was not of a cruel disposition, and that if he could have attained his ends by less sanguinary means, he might have preferred this course to the ferocious one he pursued: but, determined to rise, *per fas et nefas*, he destroyed indiscriminately every one who crossed his path to a dictatorship, and every feeling of friendship or esteem was obliterated in his visions of grandeur. He was no statesman, and unable to grasp futurity in his calculation. He found that he owed his power to terror, and kept up a system of terrorism. And, although it would be unfair to accuse him of being the author of the many sacrifices that daily took place, still the awful responsibility rests upon him. The ferocity of his delegates, which had excited horror amongst the respectable classes of the nation, so far from being checked by his

undoubted influence and authority, was sanctioned by his silence, when reported to him, and his refusal to entertain the numerous memorials submitted to him regarding the atrocities of the Departamental pro-consuls, and Le Bon, Carrier, Collot d'Herbois, and their blood-thirsty colleagues, were neither recalled nor rebuked.

In his last moments, his natural character was evident. He showed neither judgment nor courage, occasionally suffocating with concentrated rage, and soon after sunk into an apathetic dejection that could not claim the title of stoicism. As I have already said, the choice of his instruments showed his disposition, and his lack of judgment. They were only fit to serve his purpose of spreading universal terror over the land, and devoid of any of the qualifications that constitute statesmen. The immense efforts, one might say the supernatural efforts, of the *Comités, de Salut Public, et de Sureté Générale*, in defending the frontiers, and meeting the disastrous contingencies to which the country was exposed, were not his work; although Carnot, in the war department, and his other colleagues in various branches of the administration, availed themselves of the terror that prevailed, to render their measures more energetic and effectual.

He died as he had lived—a proud and haughty

coward. There cannot be the least doubt, notwithstanding the assertion of some historians, who would now wish to Pantheonize his name, that he attempted his life by discharging a pistol in his mouth. The *procès-verbal* of the surgeon who dressed his wounds proves it, since the muzzle of the pistol must have been close to his mouth, and although a gendarme, of the name of Meta, fired at him when he was rushing to throw himself out of the window, this man subsequently declared, that his arm had been struck down by Léonard Bourdon, when in the act of pulling the trigger.

I never can forget the day of his execution. The crowd that lined the streets he passed through was immense, and the shouts of joy and vengeance were deafening. I could not make my way to witness his last moments; but it is said to have been a most horrid sight. The executioner tore off the dressings of his fractured jawbone with such brutal violence, that his roar of agony, like that of a wounded lion, or rather tiger, was heard at an incredible distance.

When we dispassionately view this miserable man's career, we cannot but be surprised at the opinion of Lamartine, when he says that "Divine justice has made of his memory an enigma of which history trembles to pronounce the solution, fearing

to do him injustice if she brand it as crime, or to create horror if she should term it virtue." In my opinion, he did not possess one single redeeming virtue. His whole life showed him a heartless hypocrite, whose carresses were fatal, and whose praises might be compared to the foul salaver with which the boa-constrictor lubricates its prey. His affected Republicanism was a mere assumption, for there never lived in his time a more decided aristocrat. He never, for one moment, believed in the possibility of a French Republic; and every act of his progressively proved that a dictatorship was the only form of government he considered applicable to so fickle a people. His pride, in getting admitted into the aristocratic circle of the St. Amaranthes, accelerated his ruin; for there he lost sight of his democratic phraseology, and substituted the Monsieur and the Madame, and the plural number, for the *Citoyen*, the *Citoyenne*, and the adopted *tutoiement* of the day. Denon used to relate a curious anecdote on this sudden alteration in his manners. He was summoned to the *Comité de Salut Public* a few days before the festival of the Supreme Being. He waited in an ante-room until twelve at night, when he was ushered into the dread presence of Robespierre. They were alone. He addressed him with all the courtesy

of the *ancien régime*, and proceeded to inform Denon that he wanted to operate great changes in France ; and, amongst other improvements, to establish common sewers under Paris, which would vie with those of ancient Rome. He further stated, that he also was desirous of introducing a new costume amongst the French, better calculated both for the climate and for active exercise. He then complimented Denon, always with a "*Monsieur*," on his travels, and his talents as an artist, and requested him to draw up *un travail* on the object he contemplated. Denon was amazed—fancied that he was labouring under some mental delusion, and recommended David as a person better calculated to answer his views; to which Robespierre replied, that David was neither a Greek, a Roman, nor a Frenchman, and persisted in his request. Denon thought him mad.

But, whatever might have been the deficiencies of Robespierre as a *diplomate*, he knew the character of his countrymen, and that magniloquent words were more effectual in moving their passions than calm proceedings ; therefore, in all his speeches, he burthened his phrases, from the exordium to the climax, with the words of virtue, modesty, chastity, humanity, generosity; and a stranger who should have listened to his orations, would have looked upon him as a paragon of

morality and benevolence. He was a theoretical poet and an ideologist; and Napoleon often said that France would ultimately become the victim of *ideology*.

Although the downfall of the usurper, for such he was now denominated, had been the work of Jacobins as criminal as himself, for Collot d'Herbois, Barrère, and Tallien had been, if possible, as ferocious and as implacable, yet the people fancied that all their miseries were over. The events of the 9th Thermidor had been kept from the knowledge of the prisoners, and their friends were not allowed to visit them; while the Commune, on hearing that their faction had been accused and their leaders apprehended, directed the ruffian, Henriot, to send his officers to the gaolers of the different prisons, and order them not to receive any prisoners brought to them by a mandate from the National Convention.

I, of course, had hastened to the Ecossais, to apprise my brother of the recent events, which would soon liberate him; but Rosé, the *concierge*, refused me admittance, as he had received special orders from the Commune, and had declined receiving St. Just, when brought there by the gendarmes. But the vendors of newspapers were loudly proclaiming the astounding occurrences of the day. I saw my brother and some other prisoners at the win-

dows of one of the pavilions of the prison, and sent a hawker of papers to cry out the news within their hearing; and I must do the gaoler the justice to say that, so far from preventing this mode of communication, he did not appear in the least displeased. A few days after, my beautiful protectress, Hortense de Caux, rushed into our apartment, with my brother's liberation; and, with eyes streaming with tears, embraced me as affectionately as if I had been her own child. Providence had decreed that even in such disastrous times, woman should alleviate our sufferings.

CHAPTER XII.

Royalist reaction—Public amusements—Display of luxury—Mesdames Tallien and Récamier—Madame Lajollais—Dr. Sue's Lectures on Picturesque Anatomy—I commence the study of medicine—Hospital of La Charité—Boyer—Hôtel Dieu—Pelletan—Medical students—Their poverty and mode of living—Grisettes of the Pays Latin—Their character—Events of the 13th Vendemaire—Barras—Buonaparte—Danican—My first smell of gunpowder—A miss is as good as a mile—My hat wounded—A musket brings me into a scrape—Terror—Buonaparte again—His general information—His hostility to the English—Siege of Toulon—General O'Hara—Buonaparte wounded by the English—Strange forebodings respecting this wound—Anecdote of his dislike to every thing English.

The execution of the Triumvirate, and the members of the Commune, were public festivals; and the same populace that had but a few days before followed their victims to the scaffold with loud acclamations of delight, now rent the air with their tumultuous shouts of execration. The re-action that soon manifested itself all over the country, illustrated the levity and the inconsistency of the

fickle nation. To the rude habits and costume of the Jacobins, succeeded a display of foppery and effeminate frivolity. Elegant coats, with black or green collars (a sign of *ralliement*), replaced the coarse carmagnole; the hair, instead of being cut short, *à la Brutus* or *à la Caracalla*, was now carefully dressed, and a *cadenette*, or tress, turned up behind the head and fixed with a comb, left the neck uncovered, in imitation of what was called *la toilette de la guillotine*, when the back locks were cut off by the executioner; tresses were also dangling down on each side, like the ears of a spaniel, and called *oreilles de chien*.

In this *recherché* appearance, the youth of Paris, who called themselves *la jeunesse dorée*, perambulated the streets and gardens. Their language underwent a similar metamorphosis; instead of the vulgar vocabulary of their fallen enemies, they affected to lisp, and never pronounced their r's or g's, swearing upon their *pa'ole vète*, their *pa'ole d'honneu;* and the 'Réveil du Peuple' was now the avenging anthem, instead of the Marseillaise and the Carmagnole.

The Hymn of the Republicans hurled defiance to the foreign enemy; the 'Réveil du Peuple' called for the destruction of their personal foes, in an energetic appeal to acts of retaliation.

Peuple Français ! peuple de frères !
Peux-tu voir sans frémir d'horreur,
Le crime arborer la bannière
Du carnage et de la terreur ?
Tu souffres qu'une horde atroce,
Et d'assassins et de brigands,
Souille par son souffle féroce
Le territoire des vivants.

Voyez déjà comme ils frémissent
Ils n'osent fuir, les scélérats !
Les traces du sang qu'ils vomissent,
Déceleraient partout leur pas.
Oui, nous jurons sur votre tombe,
Par tous nos frères malheureux ;
De ne faire qu'un hécatombe
De ces cannibales affreux !

Many of the sons of the late victims of terror appeared with crape round their hats and arms; and a ball was opened in the Rue de la Michaudière, to which no one was admitted unless they had lost a relation by the guillotine, and wore the deepest mourning. This strange assembly was called *le Bal des Victimes.* Splendid concerts were given in the Théâtre Feydeau, patronized by Madame Tallien and Madame Récamier. The former of these, a Bordelais lady, of Spanish descent, was most attractive, and had been rendered still more interesting by her conduct when Tallien was deputed to her native city, where he exercised many acts of wanton cruelty, and

would certainly have shed more blood, but for her intercession.

Madame Récamier was also a beautiful woman, and both appeared in the dress, or rather in the undress, of Grecian women. The balls of the Opéra now became brilliant, and their lady Patronesses often appeared in the costume of Diana, or a nymph, their arms, shoulders, and one breast bared, and exposed to public admiration. Garat, Elleviou, and Gavaudan were now the favourite singers, and Paris once more assumed its former gaiety and dissipation. Many commissaries, who had realised large sums of money during the wars, from levied impositions, now brought forth their hoards and lived with pomp and magnificence, while Tallien, and several of the deputies, showed, by their opulence, that the charges of the most shameful peculations and exactions in their missions, so often brought against them, were not unfounded.

In opposition to the fashionable concerts then in great vogue, a most singular exhibition was got up in the Rue de Bac, called *le Concert des Chats*. A fellow had collected a large number of these animals (cats), and had placed them in rows in an amphitheatre, their hind legs and tails being concealed. The poor creatures were divided into instrumental and vocal performers; the former had mock instru-

ments in their paws, the latter held rolls of paper. The showman then pulled their tails, in solos, duets, or chorusses, and the noise the wretched animals made was truly terrific. This absurd spectacle roused the indignation of Mesdames Tallien and Récamier, and the police forbade the barbarous performance.

A furious war was waged against the Jacobins at this period, and continual frays took place between their followers and the golden youth. At last, their atrocious society was closed, and its members, called *la queue de Robespierre*, were held up as objects of general execration.

The actors of the French Theatre, who had remained in prison for several months, were liberated, and once more made their appearance amidst tumultuous applause; while the 'Réveil du Peuple' was sung, in full chorus, by all the spectators; and, notwithstanding a great scarcity of all kinds of provisions, Paris was the seat of general pleasure and excitement. The idols of terrorism were demolished; the bust of Marat, that had been put up in every theatre and public place of meeting, was smeared with blood, and then broken to pieces, and dragged in the mire; and his remains, which, a few months before, had been carried in triumph to the Pantheon, were exhumed, and cast to the winds, with frantic maledictions.

But the dearth of provisions soon threatened a famine. The populace, hungry and pennyless, became more and more troublesome. They loudly called for the re-establishment of terrorism; and, instigated by many of the members of the fallen faction, who still hoped that anarchy might restore them to their lost sanguinary power, the peace of the metropolis was constantly disturbed by this outrageous multitude, who seized every opportunity of measuring their strength with the *golden youth*, who had assumed so great an influence over the middle classes.

To understand the relative position of both parties, it is necessary to consider the nature of the Government that existed during the Reign of Terror, which plainly proved the difficulty of working the machinery of a Republic in such an uncertain and unsteady society.

France had been virtually governed by the two *Comités* of *Salut Public* and *Sureté Générale.* The Convention was merely an assembly of their creatures, and a mockery of a representative body, since no member dared to express an opinion hostile to the leading parties, without endangering his life. All debates were little better than a contest betwen gladiators in a public arena, each endeavouring to destroy his antagonist; and he who fell in the contest, endeavoured to assume the

stoic display of an utter contempt of death, and expire in a classic attitude, or, to speak more vulgarly, to die game.

The state of subjection of the members of this assembly was maintained by the municipality, or the Commune, who themselves were the mere organs of the clubs, and the mob, assembled in the popular societies of the sections, and who were ever ready to support both the Communes and the *Comités* with their pikes—for every idle vagrant became a member of these assemblies, and received forty sous a day whenever he attended their meetings, which were held three or four times in the *Décade*. Thus, the Committees actually kept up a numerous and desperate force at their command, and, on the first sound of the tocsin of the *Hôtel de Ville*, or the beat of the *rappel*, they could muster from forty to fifty thousand armed ruffians, ready for any mischief, and ripe for destruction.

While the Montagne and the Jacobins possessed such an influence in the capital, the *Comités* sent their duputies on missions, both to the Departments and to the armies. In the former, they organized popular clubs, affiliated with the Jacobins, and instituted, in the smallest town, a revolutionary committee and societies, composed of the very refuse of the inhabitants, who also received

their salary of forty sous. In the armies, the pro-consuls acted in concert with the generals in command, and kept up a constant emulation amongst the troops, by promoting private soldiers whenever a distinguished action had been reported, and by keeping their generals in a state of subjection—the enemy in their front—the guillotine in their rear.

The members of the two Committees had distinct duties allotted to them, and were, in fact, dictators. They rarely interfered with each other's specified attributions, and were only unanimous in the system of bloodshed. It was impossible, under any circumstances, that such a Government could expect permanency. All was confusion and discord, and nothing but absolute terror could have held out a prospect of even an ephemeral stability. The Revolution had assumed the character of a war—a *bellum internecinum.* Each party fought for power. The Girondists made the attempt, and were destroyed; the Commune seized it, and perished; Robespierre's party strove to carry the day, and were sacrificed by the Thermidorians, who would have ascended the scaffold in turn, had not the former examples of bloodshed led the triumphant party to avoid a similar system of extermination, less from a feeling of humanity, than from the apprehension of their

eventually sharing the fate of all their predecessors in power.

The form of government that succeeded Robespierre's Triumvirate was, if possible, still more complex in its machinery, and unwieldly in its management. Every rational observer became convinced that a Republic, without a chief magistrate, whatever might be his denomination and the extent of his authority, was an idle dream of visionary doctrinarians and ideologists.

The prisoners were now liberated, and every Deputy could apply to the *Comité de Salut Public* for the discharge of any *détenu* whom he claimed. Still there was no security; their discharge was, to a certain extent, conditional; for, on the plea that crowds of Royalists and Aristocrats had been let loose on the country, the tail of the Jacobins insisted that the name of every Deputy of the Convention who released a prisoner should be published, annexed to the prisoner's name. This proposal was rejected, on the motion of Tallien, who maintained, that if the liberation of the prisoners were made known, the names of those who had obtained their incarceration should also be published. Such a list must have led to a civil war, since every foe of the late Government would have revenged his wrongs on his secret enemies and denouncers, now brought to light.

As it was, fearful acts of vengeance were perpetrated in the Departments, chiefly in the South. The Jacobins were murdered wherever they appeared. Prisoners were massacred. A by-word of hatred became a sentence of death. At Lyons, Arles, Marseilles, this re-action was terrific: any one *suspected* of terrorism was immolated without pity, and the name of *Matévon*, the meaning of which I could never discover, was enough to doom the bearer to immediate assassination.

Our friends, the Albittes, no longer occupied the second floor of the house we lived in, but went to their hotel in the Faubourg St. Honoré. The society of my good friend, Madame de Caux, was now what was called *à Epaulettes*, and amongst the visitors who frequented her circle, was the delightful Madame Lajollais, the wife a *Chef d'Etat-Major* of Pichegru, and who, as I shall shortly relate, involved me in alarming difficulties.

I have already stated that I had been sent to study painting under Garnier, and have given, by anticipation, a sketch of a Parisian studio. It now became urgent that I should choose a profession, and an accidental circumstance induced me to follow that of medicine.

A course of lectures on *Anatomie Picturesque*, was given at the Louvre, by Dr. Sue, father, I

believe, of Eugène Sue, the well-known writer. They were attended by students of both sexes, who, after the lesson, drew, both from *la bosse*, or the cast, and from the *écorché*. For this purpose the subject was immersed in hot water, until the limbs had become flexible, and the body and extremities were then placed in the same position as the cast, and drawn from. The *prosector** of Sue was a young man of the name of Salbrune, who spoke a little English. We became acquainted, and he introduced me to the professor. Sue then lived near the Boulevard des Capucins, and gave evening lectures on Natural History, for which I received a ticket of admission. It became a fashionable place of resort; many ladies, especially *artistes*, attended. Refreshments were distributed, and, the lecture over, the Doctor would walk with his pupils round his little garden, and give them some slight knowledge of botany, dwelling, perhaps, more especially on the loves of the flowers.

Dr. Sue had a tolerable knowledge of the English language. He had translated Monro's work on Comparative Anatomy, and in a short time, he paid me more attention than I deserved. It was evident that the fine arts, whatever might

* The anatomist who dissects the preparations.

have been my taste in their cultivation, were never intended as my profession, and Sue strongly recommended me to turn my mind to the study of Surgery, which he said was in a very backward state in England, and where a French education, would afford me a fine opening. The advice was good, and, although I did not feel exactly a predilection for the medical profession, it struck me as the wisest plan I could adopt, and in this opinion I was confirmed by my friend Charles Este, whom I have already mentioned as a fellow-prisoner of my brother, and who had been, when arrested, a pupil of the celebrated Desault, at the Hôtel-Dieu. My father had been ruined. I had expressed a wish to return to England, and enter the army. This inclination was overruled, as my father could not afford to purchase me a commission, and it was decided that I should be a *Carabin*, for so medical students were nicknamed in Paris. I never could exactly find out the origin of this appellation, but have heard it traced to a certain *émeute*, in which the medical students of St. Cosme had turned out armed with carbines.

The celebrated Boyer was then considered one of the best teachers in Paris, and lectured at the Hospice de la Charité, in the Rue des Saints Pères, which was then called, Hospice de l'Unité.

Deschamps was the head surgeon, and his son, who, although a medical student, was a writer of vaudevilles, and a good performer on the horn, was a former acquaintance of mine. Moreover, my friend Salbrune, Sue's assistant, was one of the *internes*, or house-surgeons.

For eighteen months I followed Boyer's lectures and walked the hospital, but I was also matriculated in the École de Médicine, where I took out my inscriptions, and followed the courses named in the *curriculum*. Sabatier was professor of surgery, Chaussier of anatomy, Corvisart of medicine, Fourcroy of chemistry, Deyeux of pharmacy, and Thillaye gave lectures on the application of bandages, a branch of the profession that is not taught in England.

It was soon after deemed advisable that I should become an *élève externe*, or dresser, at the Hôtel-Dieu; this situation was given to candidates who had been approved of by an examination before the *administrateurs des Hospices*. This examination was both verbal and written. The candidate was first examined *viva voce* by the Board, and he then drew a written question out of an urn: he was then conducted to a chamber, and left there until he rang a bell, to announce that his answer was concluded. This answer, with the question, was then read aloud by the

Chairman, and the members proceeded to vote by *scrutin*. It was according to a similar process that all nominations to the hospitals took place. My answer, fortunately, was approved of, and I was appointed *externe* to the Salle St. Paul, a surgical ward, my *interne* being a very intelligent man, of the name of Chailly, who had charge of a division of about forty beds: our hour of attendance was six o'clock in summer, and seven in winter. Much has been said regarding this early hour of visiting the sick, when compared with the practice in our hospitals, at a much later hour. In my opinion, it was too early. The wards could not be cleaned out, the patients could not receive their breakfast, or be made comfortable after the night. But, what rendered the practice still more hard upon all parties, was the necessity of waking many a poor wretched creature from his comparatively sound morning's sleep, after a long, and, perhaps, an agonizing night, which had actually exhausted him. Many a time have the *sicurs* and I, been obliged to shake a poor patient until we had awakened him, to prepare him for the visit, which took place about half-an-hour after.

The head-surgeon was Pelletan, a most distinguished and amiable gentleman of the old school, in every sense of the word; most aristo-

cratic in all his bearings, holding a *sans culotte* in perfect horror. Of these there were many amongst the numerous students who walked the hospital, a great number of whom came from Gascony and the southern provinces.

They were mostly sadly poor and mean in their appearance; a large great coat or *houppelande*, trimmed with common fur, or plush, covered their shabby habiliments, and they usually wore a battered hat, covered with yellow or green oiled silk; their food was coarse and scanty, and their breakfast, which generally consisted of what is called a *chapon de gascogne*, or a hunch of bread, rubbed over with a clove of garlic, rendered their effluvia most pestiferous—it might perhaps have been an antiseptic odour, for truly something of the sort was requisite to cover the diversity of odious smells of which they were redolent; but, to persons unaccustomed to the inhalation, it was a fearful nuisance.

These young men were, in general, most industrious. They had walked up to Paris with scarcely a franc in their pockets, and many of them had not £20 a-year to live upon. They inhabited miserable lodgings in the *Pays Latin*, and congregated together, so as to render their expenses less onerous. They generally dined at what was politely called a *restaurant*, but, in fact, one of

those atrocious dens of nastiness and pernicious cookery, called *une gargotte*, where their messes, or *fricots*, and *frigousses*, would have turned the stomach of any well-bred hound. Still they appeared happy, and longed for the day when they could return to their Penates, and practice as *officiers de santé*, the lowest grade in the medical profession. All that they sought was sufficient knowledge to pass an examination, to obtain it, and few ever looked to a more elevated sphere in the practice of the art of healing. Yet many of the most illustrious French surgeons rose from this class, and Boyer often related that he himself walked from Gascony to Paris in a similar penurious condition.

It may seem strange, but not only were these young men apparently satisfied with their lot, but they did not heed the conduct, sometimes contemptuous, of the aristocratic portion of their fellow-students. They herded with each other, and, notwithstanding the notions of liberty and equality so recently promulgated, seemed conscious of the inferior position in which their hard destinies had placed them. It is true, that sometimes, when any of their aristocratic comrades crossed their path, or gave themselves airs of superiority, they would mutter a '*sacré muscadin!*' an epithet bestowed on the better-dressed classes of

society, and which alluded to the musk or other perfumes that they carried. However, they were not without some compensation to comfort themselves. Many of them beguiled their tedious labours, and their necessities, by a *liaison* with some humble *grisette* of the *Pays Latin;* for these *demoiselles* had their distinctions in rank.

The lowest category was that of *les enlumineuses,* whose occupation was to colour prints and fan-paper. By hard labour, they would earn a franc a day—a considerable increase to the *carabin's* income—more especially as the poor girl cooked, and washed, and mended his *nippes,* when they were susceptible of repair. The higher grades of *grisettes* were embroiderers, artificial florists, fan-makers (*evantaillistes*), dress-makers, &c.

These creatures were remarkable for their fidelity, their frugality, and their disinterestedness. Their delight was a dance at a *guinguette* or *bal d'Hiver* on a Sunday, or a pork chop at night, with a *sauce piquante aux cornichons.* At nine o'clock, a horn was sounded, or a bell rang, at the shop of the *charcutier,* to announce that the *cotelettes* were ready; and, when she could afford it, the grisette answered the call, and brought home the dainty, to share it with the sharer of her many wants. Her little garret-room was in

keeping with her humble notions of comfort; a stretcher bed, with a *lit de plume*, a rickety table, two or three straw-bottomed chairs, and an armoire, constituted her furniture. In the centre was an earthen stove, with an opening on the top to receive a *casserole* or a *marmite;* and when she possessed all these luxuries, she would boast that she had been put "*dans ses meubles.*"

Many instances have been known when these simple girls, who never for one moment thought that there was immorality or impropriety in their conduct, refused the most brilliant offers of independence, to drag on their life of toil and privation with their *bon ami;* nor, in the midst of their penury, did they ever cast an envious eye on *les belles dames*, who passed by them, or splashed them in their carriages. The display of diamonds tempted them not. They were contented with their little *croix d'or*—their little golden heart, suspended to a velvet ribbon. They did not even covet a gold chain; it was vulgar, and worn by *les Dames de la Halle.* Alas! times and revolutions have changed all this. The genuine, pure, unsophisticated *grisette* is no longer to be found—she is a fossil. Her class now aims at the distinction of a *lorette.*

I was now admitted into the *confrèrie* of surgeons, and my time, when I studied at the

Charité, was passed very pleasantly. We all clubbed for our dancing-master and fencing-master, and found ample leisure in the evenings to repose from the labour of the day; although, in the winter season, we generally dissected until eight o'clock.

The only public event in which I was engaged, and worth relating, was on the occasion of the attack on the Convention, on the 13th Vendemaire. My father received regular *billets de garde* to do duty in the National Guard of the Section, in person or by proxy; in the latter case he had to pay a *remplaçant*, or substitute, three francs. I, therefore, volunteered the service, and often mounted guard with our neighbour, the fruiterer; and the scenes of the *corps de garde* were not unfrequently amusing, as well as the various incidents of our night patroles.

At this period, the re-action of the counter-revolutionists was most energetic. Many emigrants and priests had returned to France, and exerted themselves to bring about a new order of things. Madame Tallien and Madame Récamier were still *en vogue* as leaders of the fashions; but the *salons* of Madame de Staël became, in a political point of view, what the *soirées* of Madame Roland had formerly been, a rallying-point of the perturbators. Here, their secret projects were anxiously discussed, in the apprehension of a

return to power of the Jacobin party—the *Comité de Sureté Générale* having liberated many of their most blood-thirsty members, and it was not without much opposition, that several of them were ordered to be tried by the ordinary tribunals. A new form of government became indispensable. It was decreed that two chambers should be nominated, that of the five hundred and that of the two hundred and fifty—named *des anciens*, as no deputy could be nominated to it under the age of forty. The Executive Government was to consist of a Directory, formed of five members. It was evident that this new-fangled Government could not last long; but the state of anarchy in which the country was plunged rendered some novel mode of administration desirable; although, as every one had perceived, it led to fresh convulsions and dangers.

Sad experience had shown that the Constituent Assembly committed a suicidal act when it decreed its dissolution — and that none of its members could be re-elected. To avoid a similar imprudence, which banished experienced and practical men from the helm of affairs, the Convention decreed that two-thirds of its members should remain in the new legislative body, and it then became a question, whether these two-thirds were to be selected by themselves, or returned by the

electoral assemblies. This last measure was adopted; it was decreed, that the new Constitution should be submitted to the primary assemblies, and to the armies, for their approval and acccept-ance, and that afterwards, they should proceed to the election of their representatives. It would be foreign to the nature of these Memoirs to dwell on this important subject in all its various important bearings; suffice it to say, it was in every respect calculated to produce political factions and dis-turbances, both in the army and amongst the peo-ple, distracted by the incessant struggles between the Jacobins, the Republicans, and the Royalists. Each party strove, both by the eloquence of their orations, and by bribery, to produce fresh commo-tions, and, under their influence, it was proposed that the Constitution should be accepted, but that the Convention should be dissolved, and the new Chambers composed of deputies, elected by the nation. Many of the primary assemblies decided that their sittings should be permanent, until this dissolution, and the Government, such as it was, alarmed at this menacing attitude of the Sections, ordered troops to march upon Paris.

The forty-eight Sections, both uneasy and in-dignant at the hostile attitude assumed by the Convention, nominated forty-eight Commissaries to express their determination. This measure the

Convention annulled, as illegal. They were led to this determined step, when they learned that the whole army had accepted the Constitution, and that they could depend upon its support; and in addition to this security, the Sections were divided in opinion. Moreover, all the Jacobins and Republicans were in their favour, it being evident that the opposition was promoted by the Royalist party. The Convention, therefore, boldly proclaimed that the Constitution, and the admission of two-thirds of their members to the new legislative body, was a law of the land.

The Sections now decided that this resolution of the Convention should be opposed by force of arms. The golden youth of Paris, several *chouans*, from the Vendée, and returned emigrants, excited the people, and held out the fearful dread of a return of the days of Terror; on the other hand, Ménou, who had been appointed commander of the troops in and near Paris, assembled his forces, while a vast number of Jacobins, and vagabonds of every description, flocked round the Convention, offered their services, and received arms and ammunition.

Seven or eight Sections, amongst which was that of the *Butte des Moulins*, to which I belonged, beat the *générale*, and called upon the National Guard to oppose the *buveurs de sang*,

who once more threatened France with murder and desolation.

General Ménou, who owed his life to the events of the 9th Thérmidor, beheld with apprehension, the bands of ruffians who had congregated to defend the Convention, and hesitated in assuming the command of such banditti. However, he marched against the Section le Pelletier, and, after a parley with the President, he withdrew his troops and his artillery. The Convention, greatly alarmed at this apparent defection of the military, immediately ordered Barras to supersede Ménou. This deputy, although bearing the rank of a general, felt that he was not competent to act on such an important and perilous occasion, and called to his assistance a young artillery officer, whom he had often met at Madame Tallien's—and this young officer was Napoleon Buonaparte.

This active and intelligent soldier, finding that he had only about six thousand men under his command, looked to the artillery as his chief support, and immediately despatched Murat, then a *Chef d'Escadron*, with three hundred horse, to bring the park of artillery, from the camp of the *Sablons*. On its arrival, he planted his field-pieces and howitzers at every point on which an attack was likely to take place, and awaited the hostile movement of the National Guard, ready

to shower grape-shot on their advancing columns, unprotected by any guns.

On the morning of the 13th Vendemaire, the insurgent Sections were in motion, and our batallion was formed at the Church of St. Roch, opposite to which we resided. The first hostile demonstration was exercised on an unfortunate orderly of a cavalry regiment, who, having refused to give up his dispatches, was fired on, and had his thigh fractured. He was brought past our door, to the Sisters of Charity, in the neighbourhood.

It was now five o'clock, Abbé Barthélemi was dining with us, and, I recollect, was about taking a spoonful of lentil soup, when the first discharge of artillery was heard. He dropped his spoon in the greatest alarm, and we all rushed to the windows. The firing was continued, and I beheld a pastrycook's boy, with a tray on his head, carrying pies and tarts, killed by a shot, and all his good things scattered in the street. Melancholy as the sight might have been, I could not check an involuntary laugh at the catastrophe, and at all the upset *patés*, for which I received a severe admonition. Like a regular *gamin de Paris*, I took my carabine and ran to join my friend, the fruiterer, on the steps of the church, which had been occupied by National Guards, now

thinned by the fire of musquetry, and of a four pounder and a howitzer, from the Cul de Sac Dauphin, then called Rue de la Convention. The artillery enfiladed the Rue Neuve St. Roch, but only a portion of the front of the church was exposed to the fire. The *Sectionnaires*, therefore, kept up only a fire of *tirailleurs*, on the Conventional troops. They were under the command of Danican, who certainly made a great noise by his vociferations, *en avant*, but to little purpose, as the skirmishers, generally speaking, fell *en arrière*. In truth, I must observe that the *jeunesse dorée*, who, for the sake of wearing red and green epaulettes, were chiefly in the flank companies of the batallions, were those who displayed the less share of valour, and who gradually disappeared most rapidly.

The contest was most unequal, as the musketry of the Sections told but little, while the grape and shells of their opponents, swept everything within its range, as far as the Rue Gallion. At the corner of the Cul de Sac Dauphin, was a wine-shop, and that of a chemist named Néret. Their front doors opened in the Rue St. Honoré, but they had several windows in the street occupied by Buonaparte's troops. Young as I was, I thought that, if we could break into these houses and occupy their windows, we should be able to open a fire of

musketry with more precision and better effect. I suggested this to the captain of the company, a worthy pastry-cook, who submitted the plan to General Danican, but he hesitated in its adoption, and was evidently alarmed by the heavy fire of artillery, kept up on our left in the Rue de l'Echelle, and, on our right, on the Place Vendôme, At last he disappeared, and I never saw him again until I met him at Lewis Goldsmith's, in London, when, much to my surprise, he related his gallant and desperate doings on that occasion in a manner which, truly, made me entertain some doubts whether I had been there or not; although a musket-ball through my hat had proved to me that it was not a vision.

This badge of danger, strange to say, afforded a singular example of maternal feelings. My poor mother, who was distracted at my having quitted home, used to show this hat, with pride, to every visitor who came to the house, although exclaiming at the same time, "That the desperate boy would be her death!"

The contest did not last two hours. About six o'clock, the fire of the Sections had slackened, from the best of all possible reasons,—the greater number of combatants, of whom I formed one, having thought it advisable to return to their respective homes. The *pas de charge*, which had been beating

the whole time, sounded nearer; the rumbling of gun-carriages announced the advance of the Conventional force, and in a few minutes they were in possession of the post we had occupied; when Buonaparte, wheeling his guns to the right and to the left, poured a shower of grape up and down the Rue St. Honoré—I should think with little effect, as most of the fugitives, very wisely, made off, by the adjoining lateral streets.

Thus ended this affair, which has been sadly misrepresented and exaggerated by historians. On our side—I mean, in our section, we had only about fifteen or twenty men killed, and fifty or sixty wounded. On the side of the Convention, I should imagine the loss must have been trifling, as the gunners who worked the artillery, were the only men exposed to a straggling and unsteady fire.

On this occasion, there was neither organization nor unanimity in the Sections; it was evidently a Royalist re-action; and many of the National Guard fought, not exactly knowing why, but more particularly in the apprehension of plunder, as it was generally rumoured that the forces of the Convention chiefly consisted of the Jacobins and *Septembriseurs*, who were anxious to restore the Reign of Terror, which had just been overthrown.

The next morning, several of the Sections were disarmed, and all persons possessing arms were

ordered, under a heavy penalty, to surrender them at the Comité, within twenty-four hours. My brother, who was an ardent Royalist, had entertained some idea of joining the insurgents, for which purpose he had purchased a musket. However, he had left it at the Hôtel Van de Niver, with one of the nephews of the unfortunate banker, a M. de Villeminot, and, as I was the general fag, I was sent to fetch it and give it up. It so happened that, passing by a post of the line, mounting on the Treasury, in the Rue Vivienne, a soldier observed the bright firelock on my shoulder, and asked permission of his officer to exchange his piece, which was out of order, for mine. This change being sanctioned, I received his musket, which I carried to the Comité; but both the muzzle and the pan were black from the preceding evening's firing, and, being in the hands of an English youth, the circumstance was nigh bringing me again into trouble; but I explained the case in a plain unvarnished manner, and referred the President to the post at the Treasury; whether he sent to inquire or not, I do not know, but here ended the matter.

It was after this event that I first saw Napoleon. The deputies Albittes, as I have already stated, had left our house, and had removed to their magnificent hotel, and they were succeeded by

another deputy, of the name of Serres. His wife was an amiable, quiet person, and they occasionally had *bouillotte* parties in the evening, which we frequented. The Serres were very intimate with Buonaparte, and he was often there. I recollect that when Madame Serres told him how much he had terrified them by firing down our street, several shots having struck the house, he replied, with great gallantry, that if it had not been in consideration of her, he would have shelled the *quartier*.

My father used often to converse with the young General; and I well remember his observing that he had rarely met so intelligent a person. His conversation generally dwelt on the East Indian trade of Holland, with which my father was of course conversant, and on the means best calculated to improve it to the prejudice of England; and my father observed that he was surprised at his accurate information on the subject. Napoleon was then a pale, sickly-looking man, with a sallow complexion, and his long, lanky hair gave a still more cadaverous appearance to his countenanee; but his eyes were dark and penetrating. He very rarely remained long, and generally took an abrupt departure. Amongst the visitors of the family was an officer of Pichegru's staff; if I recollect well, his name was Labadouchy. When he entered, Buonaparte would

cast an ineffable look of contempt on him and leave the room. I remember he once said to M. de Serres, on seeing him walking in the apartment, "*Comment! vous recevez de ces gens là?*" I much regret that I did not direct more attention to his usual conversation, little suspecting, at the time, what would be his future destinies! He generally stood before the fire, and many of the visitors were grouped around him, and seemed to listen to him with peculiar interest. My brother related to me a curious anecdote. I have already stated, that he was very partial to the study of the art of war; and, on one occasion, the artillery being the subject of conversation, my brother asked him some questions, and expressed his regret at not having entered the army. Buonaparte dryly replied: "*Monsieur, on doit toujours avoir des regrets, quand on ne sert pas sa patrie;*" and so saying, he turned on his heel in a most rude and abrupt manner. Whenever the English, or our fleets, or armies were spoken of, he betrayed impatience. During the short peace of 1802, at one of the reviews in the Carrousel, he observed an English officer in the Highland uniform. He went up to him and asked him if he belonged to the 42nd regiment? On the officer replying that he was in a Fencible corps, Napoleon turned from him, taking a pinch of snuff, and added, "*Ah!*

Monsieur est, sans doute, dans la Garde Nationale." This remark might appear trivial, but Napoleon alluded to the motley crowd of English who then flocked to Paris, in various fancy uniforms, many of them passing themselves for officers in the British army.

Napoleon never lost a favourable opportunity in making himself acquainted with every particular regarding the discipline and economy of our troops. His first successes were obtained at the siege of Toulon, when serving against our auxiliary forces, commanded by General O'Hara, who fell into his hands by a sad want of military experience and foresight.

Admiral Hood had landed a British force to assist the inhabitants of Toulon, who had revolted against the existing Government. The siege of the place was carried on but slowly, and many difficulties arose that obstructed the progress of the besiegers; until at last, Buonaparte, who was then an officer of artillery, suggested the plan of carrying the Fort of l'Eguilette, which commanded the harbour, and the occupation of which would have compelled the English fleet to put to sea, and most probably to re-embark their troops. Buonaparte carried on his operations with much secresy, and suddenly opened the fire of a masked battery on Fort Malbosquet. General O'Hara, thus taken by

surprise, determined to storm the battery, which he attacked and carried with great gallantry, at the head of about 1500 men. Buonaparte moved to the support of the position with a batallion, and, advancing in close column, in a *boyau*, communicating with the covered way, poured in a volley on the English detachment. General O'Hara unfortunately imagined that this fire proceeded from a party of his own troops, and rushed forward to stop it, when he received a wound in the head, and was taken prisoner, his men being compelled to retreat by the rapid advance of the French, another body bearing down on them to cut them off from the town.

It is not generally known, but, in this affair, Buonaparte received a bayonet-wound in the thigh. Of this I was assured by the Dowager Grand Duchess of Baden, the niece of Josephine. This circumstance he kept a profound secret, and entertained singular presentiments, of a sinister nature regarding it; often fancying that it was ominous of his ultimate fall under the British power. His hatred to the English was most inveterate; and Countess de Walsh, *dame d'honneur* to the Grand Duchess Stéphanie, related to me an anecdote which showed that he sometimes displayed this hostile feeling in a most trivial manner.

One evening, at Malmaison, the Court were

sitting round a table, engaged in various pursuits, and Princess Hortense was amusing herself in writing in various hands. Napoleon looked over her shoulder, and asked what sort of hand she was then imitating. She replied, "*L'Anglaise*," the name given in France to a running hand. Napoleon instantly snatched the paper, tore it, and stamped in under his foot, exclaiming fiercely, "*Madame, n'imitez rien qui appartienne a cette nation !*"

I had witnessed the creation of the French Republic. I now had been present at its extinction. After the 13th Vendemaire, and the dissolution of the National Convention, its blood-red star had set for ever. All France had beheld the experiment. It proved a dream of ideologists. The character of the nation, as I have already said, was not compatible with popular institutions. It was an endeavour to strike the foundation of a mighty fabric in moving sands ; and it was evident to any intelligent observer, that the reins of public affairs would, sooner or later, be grasped by some daring adventurer, whatever might be the appellation which, for an appearance of political consistency, the nation might bestow on him.

The Convention had closed its sittings. The proceedings of that fierce assembly, composed of

the most heterogeneous and discordant elements, will be recorded in the history of the world, as an eternal monument of human wisdom, and of mortal frailty—of energy when the country was in danger, and of pusillanimity when its own independence, and honour, were trampled upon by ambitious competitors for supremacy.

Ere its members separated, they were resolved, if possible, to efface from the annals of their country, the atrocities committed under their authority—as if a tardy repentance could atone for their guilt in the eyes of God or man!

They decreed, that all those who did not wish to remain in France, under Republican laws, should be allowed to leave the country, with their property; while, at the same time, having just repelled the last attack of the Royalist party, they resolved that no returned emigrants, or any of the relations of an emigrant, should be invested with civil or military authority, until a general peace; and finally, they abolished the penalty of death in all political cases, and changed the name of the blood-stained *Place de la Révolution* for that of *Place de la Concorde.* At the same time, a general amnesty was proclaimed, with the exception of persons who had participated in the last attempt to restore the power of royalty. The members then rose from their seats—seats

so often vacated by the hand of the executioner—which had once been occupied by the most pure and the most disinterested Republicans, now consuming, in the quick-lime of their promiscuous sepulchres, with their merciless destroyers,—amidst tumultuous shouts of *Vive la République!* The President then announced, "that the National Convention had fulfilled its mission, and its sittings were concluded."

What a mission! when we consider the difficulties, apparently insurmountable, with which they had to contend. When they came into office, France was distracted with intestine discords—her frontiers threatened by Europe in arms; yet the dangers of the Republic constituted its salvation. War, the most destructive war, became the safety-valve of the country. The immolation of Louis XVI., was one of their first acts, for it rendered such a war inevitable; and, in a few months, a million of men were in arms, who had no option between victory or starvation. The confiscation of the immense revenue of the church, the seizure of the property belonging to the wealthy emigrants, the issue of a forced paper currency, and the guillotine, enabled them to raise this immense force, which soon supported itself on the theatre of its operations, by heavy impositions and requisitions on the inhabitants, who had, moreover, to keep the

soldiery on free quarters. But the nature of these efforts was stupendous; an army of 1,200,000 men of all arms, parks of artillery, both for field service and sieges, pontoon trains, commissariat waggons, and all the implements of war, were provided in three months. As I have already stated, the leaden coffins were torn out of the graves to make bullets, and the bronze of church bells cast into projectiles, or metamorphosed into a copper coinage, to pay the army on their march to hive in other lands.

But for this outlet—with an empty exchequer, without trade or income, this multitude must have obtained work, or have fed like locusts upon the country. Danton was once asked how these hungry men could have been supported; he replied, "that to meet their necessities, every man above sixty, and every woman above fifty, should be sacrificed on the altar of the country, as useless subjects of the commonwealth!"

During the three years of its sittings, the Convention did more for the State than the Roman Republic and its Emperors in centuries: although its members seemed occasionally to be thrown into a state of delirium by the feverish excitement of the times; now, inspired with the most vivid exaltation, now sunk to a condition of despondency, bor-

dering upon a collapse of every energy; now hurling in proud defiance the thunderbolts of war, and soon after crouching before infuriated usurpers of their representative authority.

Such will always be the case in public bodies, when danger is imminent, and desperate resolves must be adopted on the spur of the moment. The majority, timid and hesitating, without any fixed idea or decided plan of operation, will invariably give way to the influence of men of action and audacious presumption; and the yea and nay voters must yield to enthusiastic preponderance. Then, the weak become tools in the hands of the strong, and must either bend or be broken.

The Constituent Assembly had framed what they considered to be a just constitutional code of laws; the Convention, instead of consolidating their labours, destroyed the work of their predecessors, and proclaimed a Republic, before the notions and the habits of the people had fitted them for the transition; a transition that was not the result of gradual deposits and stratas, but a change of the very configuration of the land, operated by the tremendous fall of a volcanic mountain; while, in accordance with the geological notions of Strabo, the convulsions of an earthquake had thrown up marvellous formations, unknown in the moral cosmo-

geny of our globe. The consequence was soon obvious : anarchy overthrew the founders of the Republic, and a Dictatorship became inevitable. There no longer existed an independent and a courageous power to counterpoise brute force, and that force ultimately consumed itself in the expansion of its own boundless energies.

It was then, that the Convention became a mere nominal body, ruled by the members of its *Comités*, to whom the management of all State affairs had been confided. The Revolution had been intended to obtain a reform of the most fearful abuses, and establish a wise balance of power in the State ; under the Convention, two counter-revolutionary influences tended to neutralize, if not to destroy, the result of this first movement : the counter-revolution of the Royalists, and the ultra revolution of the Jacobins. The fulcrum on which both parties rested the lever of their authority was anarchy and terror. The Royalist re-action had been crushed on the 13th Vendemaire, soon after the Jacobins had been ostensibly overruled. The Convention had abandoned the helm of the State in the midst of a storm, and France was doomed to become the stake of political gamesters, her destinies hanging upon the hazard of a die.

It was my lot to witness the early struggles for this disputed power, during what might be called the riotous wake of the deceased Republic, and young as I was, found myself involved, most innocently, as I shall shortly relate, in one of the most desperate and wild conspiracies of the momentous epoch.

CHAPTER XIII.

Depreciation of *assignats*—Great distress, and great opulence—The Directories — Barras—His circles—Buonaparte—Hoche—Society of the *Eveillés*—Babœuf—His conspiracy to establish *le bonheur commun*—Drouet—Society of *les amis du suicide*—Commercial mania—Madame Lajollais—*La machine infernale*—I am involved in a plot—My brother arrested by mistake—I determine on leaving France.

THE Reign of Terror was over; yet many moderate persons regretted that more energetic measures had not been adopted by the Government to punish the late perturbators of an approaching tranquillity. The country was, if possible, in a more distracted state than at any previous period of the Revolution. The partisans of Royalty and Jacobinism were exerting themselves to renew a struggle for ascendancy; and the finances of the nation were in a hopeless condition. Misery and hunger were spread over the land. It is true that Paris was brilliant and gay.

The theatres and public places of amusement were thronged; but those who participated in these enjoyments, were men who had hoarded their property during the preceding disastrous days, and now burst into light from their obscure chrysalic condition.

The depreciation of *assignats* was such, that a *Louis d'or* was worth two thousand francs; yet the holders of funds received their *rentes* in this worthless paper; while to meet the *emprunt forcé*, or forced loan, of six hundred millions, they were obliged to pay their contributions, one half in paper and the other half in specie; and, as *rentiers de l'Etat*, we should have starved, had not my father, as I have already stated, purchased gold in bars, and now and then chopped off a morsel to meet our daily wants.

Fortunately, the odious *maximum* was abolished, and provisions became less scarce. During the Reign of Terror, the farmers and corn-dealers were compelled, by the fear of the guillotine and of public vengeance, to supply the capital; but, when they no longer entertained that dread, they withheld their stock until they could obtain a fair price for it in an open market.

Those who had money, were, therefore in a flourishing condition; but *rent*-holders, and clerks in public offices—in fact, all those who derived

their income from the State, were in absolute penury. With the usual sophistry of French arguments, the Government insisted that there was no national bankruptcy, since every one who depended upon the revenue was placed on a similar footing; their publicists maintaining that a country was only in a state of insolvency when one class lost and another category of society gained; and, strange to say, this absurd doctrine was advocated by several of their most distinguished *financiers;* and even Calonne wrote a pamphlet, in London, to show that the burthen of *assignats* was a mode of becoming bankrupt without any declaration of insolvency!

The Directory could not boast of any man of genius amongst its members, with the exception of Carnot, whose chief duties were confined to the war department. Sièyes had refused a seat in the Government. The cunning priest, who always stood behind the scenes, holding the strings of the political puppets who figured on the stage, wisely foresaw that such a state of things could not be durable. He was, perhaps, the only man in France who could have been of permanent service to the commonwealth in its overwhelming difficulties. Barras, was, no doubt, a courageous and bold administrator; but his character partook

of the fire of his native *Provence.* He was a poet and an ideologist; and, although a brave and determined soldier, thought more of the pleasures of his villa at Grosbois, his luxurious table, his courtezans, and his horses, than of the pressing affairs of the State. He was determined to make amends for the privations and forced appearances of frugality which he had experienced during the Reign of Terror. He had realized large sums of money, both by bribes and speculations; and his splendid *salon* was crowded with general officers, commissaries, and contractors, who, in the course of a short time, had not only realized large fortunes, but educated themselves with such industry, that their natural habits and manners had been completely metamorphosed. A gallaxy of beautiful women of every description added to the attraction of his *soirées;* and the choicest spirits of the day, in literature and the fine arts, were also constant visitors of his circle; while, amongst the promising young soldiers of the epoch, Buonaparte, and Hoche, were most conspicuous. Hoche, an ambitious, generous youth, had been a sergeant in the Gardes Françaises, and purchased books, to educate himself, out of the produce of waistcoats which he embroidered for his officers. La Reveillere

Lepaux was busied in introducing his favourite creed of *Theophilanthropy*, to replace the worship of Reason, and the rites of *l'Etre Suprême*, and was as inactive and feeble as his other colleagues.

The Directory had been deprived of its power of action by the new constitution; for the Convention, when, considering the abject subserviency into which it had been thrown by the executive committees of their body, wished to provide against a similar encroachment of its power, and rendered the executive branch of the Government dependent on the representatives of the country.

In consequence of this want of firmness and energy, France was distracted by constant plots and disturbances. In the southern provinces, the Royalist party not only exercised fearful retaliations, to which I have already alluded; but new societies, calling themselves "*Les Enfans de Jésus*," "*Les Enfans du Soleil*," were formed in various quarters, and initiated in their mysteries of blood all those whom they thought likely to join their banners. One of these societies was called *Les Eveillés*, or the Wide Awake; and all those who did not belong to them were named *Les Dormeurs*, or the Sleepers. These enthusiasts held meetings in woods and caverns. A 'Sleeper' would receive a written intimation to attend at a certain place, at

the peril of his life. If fear, or political motives, induced him to comply with the order, he found two or three persons, perfect strangers to him, who led him to the assembly of the society, advising him to muster all his courage on the occasion. As the party proceeded, a clashing of swords was heard, with loud cries of help. They hastened their steps—and beheld three or four bodies, apparently dead, stretched on the ground, with their conquerors standing over them, wiping the blood off their swords. One of the party anxiously inquired what had been the cause of the fray, when he was sternly informed that they had "*dispatched some Sleepers who would not open their eyes.*" The trembling visitor was now led before the terrific leader of the band: he was an old man, with a long white beard, and surrounded with fierce-looking satellites, in blue jackets, with a white scarf, and armed to the teeth; over his head was perched a large eagle, whose fiery eyes were wandering in every direction, and on the table before him was an enormous owl. Certain oaths, under the most terrific penalties, were now imposed upon the visitor; but they chiefly engaged him to sacrifice, without pity or remorse, all the enemies of the Crown or the Church, and to hold himself ever ready to shed his blood in

defence of *l'aigle impérieux*. Every meeting of these desperate men was followed by the death of the unfortunate beings they had condemned.

While the Royalists were thus engaged, the Jacobins were not idle. One day I was requested to go over to a public house, nearly opposite to us, where, to my surprise, I found our old servant Coté, whom we had been obliged to discharge from motives of economy, dressed as a *débardeur*.* He took me into a private room, and with tears in his eyes, supplicated me to persuade my family to leave Paris, as there was to be a *mouvement populaire* to plunder the capital and slaughter every one who possessed more than two thousand francs per annum. I thought the poor fellow deranged, but still deemed it advisable to communicate his message to my father, who laughed at the absurdity of the report. This did not satisfy me, and I repaired to my usual *confidante* and adviser, Madame de Caux, to whom I related the circumstance. She immediately saw Barras, who was now a frequent visitor at her hotel: but the Director, so far from being surprised at the intelligence, acknowledged that such a conspiracy was actually hatching, and that the movement was of such a nature, that the

* *Débardeurs* were men who loaded and unloaded barges on the river.

Government had thought it advisable to remove all the archives of the State to Fontainebleau, to which place the Assembly of Five Hundred, and the Ancients, would have to remove their sittings.

This conspiracy was the famous *conjuration* of Babœuf. In the amnesty of the Convention, murderers and thieves were not included, and proceedings had been threatened against many of the assassins of the massacre of September. This slaughter had been considered of a political nature, and, therefore, it was expected that its perpetrators were included in the amnesty. Babœuf, who had assumed the name of *Gracchus*, was one of the *Septembriseurs*, and determined to appeal to the people against what he considered the tyranny of the Counter-revolutionary Government. He aimed at the popularity of Marat, and, although an ignorant and uneducated man, he had commenced the publication of a paper called, "Le Tribun du Peuple," in which the sanguinary exhortations of Marat, in the "Ami du Peuple," were seasoned with all the blasphemy and obscenity of Hébert's *Père du Chesne.*

This Babœuf was of a very low condition, and in his language and dress imitated the class from which he had arisen. His appearance was that of a *Farau de port*, whose costume was something like that of a *débardeur*—broad sailor's trousers,

shoes with low insteps and large silver buckles, a short jacket, with a red sash, the bosom open, to show the large shirt frill, a round hat, with a broad velvet band; the hair greased and powdered with flour, with a club tail.

This ruffian considered himself another Massaniello. He frequented various wine-shops where his followers congregated, and the signal of meeting was a flourish or a *fanfare* of French horns, a melody *sui generis*, not unfrequent in public houses. Several thousands of the very lowest of the most desperate classes, were enlisted under the banner of this vagabond. Unfortunately, too much importance was given to this association from the circumstance of Babœuf being merely an instrument of more influential persons; and Drouet, one of the Deputies given up to the Austrians, and who had lately returned, when exchanged, with his fellow-prisoners for Madame Royale, the daughter of Louis XVI., was a chief promoter of this plot.

Drouet had been cruelly treated by the Austrians, stripped nearly naked and dragged about their camp in chains, exhibited to the soldiers as a wild beast, and exposed to every possible brutality, and he could not understand how the Government could negociate for peace with a power which had thus trampled on the rights of

nations, since he had not been a prisoner of a war, but betrayed into the hands of his enemies by a conspirator. He, therefore, was anxious to overthrow an administration which he considered so unpatriotic and unjust, and Babœuf's project was to place the reins of the Government in the hands of the people.

His system was formed on what he called, in his paper, '*le bonheur commun*,' or common happiness. He demanded an agrarian law—an equal distribution of property and of labour, an equal participation in all public and private revenues, and insisted that the industrious classes alone had the right, not only to direct public works, but to have a share in private speculations. To commence this reign, on the breaking out of the conspiracy, the members of the Directory, of the Council of the Ancients, and the Five Hundred, were to be massacred; the Treasury seized, with the telegraph, the arsenal, and the park of artillery of Meudon; and the contents distributed to the people, who were to be allowed to plunder all the shops in the Palais Royal, the Rues St. Martin, St. Denis, St. Honoré, Vivienne, Neuve des Petits Champs, and the Quai des Orfèvres for six hours. The plunder was to begin at the sound of the French horn, and to end when the same instrument had

announced that the hour for the appropriation of public property had ceased.

After this devastation, the mobacracy were to be quartered on and maintained by the more wealthy inhabitants, and any one who refused to give them provisions was to be hung up at the next lamp-post. It was further provided, that any soldier who joined the people with his arms and ammunition, should be promoted to the rank of officer, or allowed to leave the service on a pension for life: but, to keep up the army, allowances were to be granted to every soldier of such an advantageous nature, that there could be no fear of the ranks being thinned by those who retired. Rossignol, the blood-thirsty Commander of the Revolutionary Army in the Vendée, was to be their Commander-in-Chief.

Gracchus Babœuf, when apprehended, had the audacity to address the Directory, stating "That he was a power (*une puissance*), therefore claimed a right to treat with them on equal terms." He added, "I am the Chief of a formidable sect that you will not destroy by sending me to the scaffold, and which will avenge my death by terrific examples. You may hold the threads of the conspiracy. It is nothing to have seized upon a few individuals, other chiefs will arise in various quarters. Shed not blood uselessly; treat with the

patriots and the people. They recollect that you yourselves were once sincere Republicans, and they will forgive you, if you join them in their endeavours to save the Republic."

This deluded miscreant flattered himself that the people would rescue him, but his condemnation and execution were scarcely noticed. Drouet was allowed, by Barras, to effect his escape; but in addition to Drouet, several other deputies were involved in this daring affair; amongst others, Laignelot, Vacher, Amar, Chouchon, Pelletier and St. Fargeau, brother to the one who had been assassinated by a *Garde du Corps*, during the early days of the Revolution. Strange infatuation! men of education, of acknowledged abilities, joining such a reckless and destructive conspiracy! They truly believed that the masses possessed sufficient virtue and self-command, to legislate for themselves!

The power of the Directory, and its utter incapacity in the government of the country, have been fully detailed by the historians of the times. Its reign, however, produced great changes in the state of society. A romantic mania at one time prevailed, and the most absurd metaphysical notions were adopted and followed. For instance, a society of the 'friends of suicide' was instituted, consisting of twelve members. A lot was cast,

to decide which of them should commit suicide in the presence of the other. Each member was required to be a man of honour—to have experienced the injustice of mankind, the ingratitude of a friend, or the falseness of a wife or a mistress, to have experienced, for years, a certain vacuity of the soul, and a discontent with everything in the lower world!

Another fashionable mania was a commercial one: every one, high or low, became a trader. Ladies would purchase pieces of muslin, or silk, or lace, and go about selling them by retail, at advanced prices. Many ladies of the *bon ton* of the day, were speculating in oil, and butter, and salt fish, and carried about samples of these commodities. The men assembled at the entrance of the Palais Royal, leading to the Rue Vivienne, and called, from its steps, *Le Perron*, and there they would negotiate the sale, not only of stock and shares in public and private funds, but of horses, cloth, leather, anything, in short, that could be bought or sold to advantage; others, of more elevated mind, dealt in books, pictures, prints, &c., and attended auctions for bargains to be disposed of afterwards in private houses. Such was the rage for traffic that, in a *soirée*, you would see ladies, young and old, exchange or sell their trinkets—their watches, and no Israelite ever chuckled with

greater delight when they fancied that they had *done* a purchaser ! I recollect my dear friend *la belle Hortense*, asking me to endeavour to dispose of some splendid gilt *chenets* (fire dogs), which the Albittes had purchased with the Hôtel de Créqui, and which bore the armorials of that ancient family, and my poor father, but for our entreaties would have put all we had to auction.

In the meantime, I continued my medical studies with great assiduity, although I did not—could not, relinquish my dramatic pursuits: not only did I perform in private theatricals, but, in conjunction with Charles Este, wrote a melodrama for the Theâtre de la Cité, founded on an English romance, and called, "Alphonse et Angelina, ou, le Spectre du Château." This gave me a free entrance to the theatre, and I soon after brought out "Le Rendez-vous au Foyer," "Regnard à Algiers," "Le Premier Grenadier de France," &c. With this double pursuit, I had to work hard, and was obliged to make up by night, reading and dissecting, for my indulgences of the day. Notwithstanding all these attractions, I was determined to go to England, and circumstances soon accelerated my departure.

Amongst the acquaintances I made at Madame de Caux's, I visited a Madame Lajollais, who was a most delightful enthusiast: Madame Roland was

her divinity, and Charlotte Corday a saint in her calendar. Her husband was a *Chef d'Etat-Major* of Pichegru. I constantly frequented her delightful *soirées*, and had observed, for some time much mystery in the conversation of her guests, who were chiefly military men. She often entrusted me with papers to deliver to a person of the name of Chevroolat, who resided at the Garde-Meuble. I was as ignorant then as I am at the present moment of the nature of these papers. I was not long undeceived, at any rate, as to their dangerous tendency. The *machine infernale* exploded in the Rue St. Nicaise, and, as it is well known, was nigh blowing up Buonaparte. All Paris was in a state of consternation; and every one attributed this plot to the English. It was asserted that it had been planned at a meeting at a French *restaurant* in Leicester Square. To my utter surprise, I received a note from Madame Lajollais, to inform me that she had been obliged to fly from Paris, and requesting me to conceal myself, as my name had, most unfortunately, been included in the list of the accused. I was thunderstruck, and immediately repaired to my ever dear counsellor, Madame de Caux, who consulted her brothers, and it was decided that I should keep out of the

way, until the affair had been cleared up. I, of course, left Paris, and sought a retreat with a Mr. Whittle, a friend of my father, who had once been a Governor in India, and was now living at Chantilly.

My brother, at the time, was on his way from Calais—where he had married and was settled—to Paris, and, on arriving at Arras, being, no doubt, mistaken for me, he was arrested, and thrown into the prison of the Dominicans, not a little surprised at so unexpected an occurrence.

The moment I heard of his mishap, I started for Arras, and called upon the mayor, a worthy man of the name of Chevalier, and a woollen-draper, who very wisely advised me to return to Paris, and exert myself to prove my innocence and liberate my brother; and added, very sagaciously, "You will gain nothing by being both in prison."

On my return, I found that my friends had not been idle; and I also repaired to an *intime*, of the name of Trobriand, who was then an officer in the hussars, called *les Serins de Madame Buonaparte*, as they were dressed in a light yellow uniform, and formed part of her husband's guard. Trobriand, who afterwards rose to the rank of General, was brother to Madame Dervieux, another friend

of mine, who then, it is said, lived with Lucien Buonaparte; in short, I succeeded in proving what was the fact, that I knew nothing whatever of the conspiracy.

This event, however, decided me to lose no time in returning to England. My father had already received a letter to apprize him that I was recommended to an assistant surgeoncy in the East India Company's service; and I bade a sad and last farewell to all that I then held dear in life—not only to my parents, whom I felt I should never embrace again, but to other friends and connexions whom I fondly loved. My mother's entreaties to remain, were unavailing. After all that I had witnessed, I felt a strong reluctance to continue in a country constantly convulsed by factions, and, somehow or other, I experienced a proud feeling in being an Englishman. In vain I was often told, more especially by my fascinating friend, Madame de Caux, that, being born of Dutch parents, I was not bound by any allegiance to the spot of my birth; and, at the time, she pressed me to accept an offer made to me of being attached to the young and enterprising Hoche, (who then contemplated an expedition to Ireland or England,) in the ostensible quality of a surgeon, but in reality, of private secretary. I rejected the

proposal, as an insult. Servois, my excellent, my virtuous preceptor, not only praised my conduct, but confirmed my resolution; and, with a heavy heart, I quitted friends, the like of whom I never found again.

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